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Charles Reed

MEMOIR

OF

SIR CHARLES REED

BY HIS SON

CHARLES E. B. REED, M.A.

AUTHOR OF "THE COMPANIONS OF THE LORD."

London

MACMILLAN AND CO.

1883

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TO HER

WHOSE SYMPATHY, EVER SOUGHT AND NEVER FAILING,

STRENGTHENED THE LIFE OF HER HUSBAND,

AND NOW HAS AIDED

THE PEN OF HER SON,

THESE PAGES

ARE AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED.

PREFACE.

ALTHOUGH the following pages tell a plain story that needs no introduction, a few words may be allowed the writer as to the materials he has had at command, and the use he has sought to make of them.

The materials have in some respects been scanty. Sir Charles Reed's correspondence was for the most part brief and confined to business. Nor did he leave any private diary, from which his biographer might draw—perhaps be tempted to draw with too free a hand. He was too active a man to chronicle the doings of each day; while as to putting on paper his thoughts and reflections, he would probably have agreed

with a worthy minister who, after keeping a diary of this kind for some months, closed it with the remark:—"If I write down my better feelings, people will think too well of me; and if I record my worse, I shall pain those who care for me."

In using the materials that were available, the writer has endeavoured to follow two principles—the one, to restrict himself to matters of general, as distinguished from family, interest; and the other, to dwell only on what was in some degree characteristic. While, therefore, the public movements in which Sir Charles took part could not be passed by, they are introduced only as a background, and with a view to make his figure stand forth more clearly on the canvas.

For it is the man, and not his surroundings, that one cares to paint. Striking incident is not essential in order to justify a biography. The one element that is needed is power; it may be power of bold and rapid movement, or

of intellectual leadership, or—as it is believed will be found here—of high, concentrated, and steadfast purpose. And if this purpose has been pursued amid paths trodden by the many, then the value of the record as an incentive to others should not be lessened, but enhanced.

It may be added that this Memoir has had to be prepared in the intervals of other work. The writer has thus been prevented from consulting many of his father's old friends, who might have been able to contribute valuable information. Among those who have kindly assisted, none deserve more grateful mention than the Rev. Andrew Reed, elder brother to Sir Charles, and Mr. G. H. Croad, head of the staff of the London School Board.

April 12*th*, 1883.

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The Portrait which forms the Frontispiece is Engraved by G. J. STODART, *from a Photograph taken in* 1880 *by* MESSRS. ELLIOTT AND FRY.

MEMOIR

OF

SIR CHARLES REED

CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE.

"What God
Intended as a blessing and a boon,
We have received as such; and we can say,
'A solemn, yet a joyful, thing is life,
Which, being full of duties, is for this
Of gladness full, and full of lofty hopes.'"

"A GOOD education is a fortune which a child can never spend and a parent can always bestow." So said Andrew Reed, the watchmaker of St. Clement Danes, to his wife, who kept what, in these instructed and inspected days, would be called a private adventure school, and in all likelihood be condemned accordingly. They had no opportunity of applying their doctrine in the case

of several of their children, who died early; but as for their eldest surviving son, the bearer of his father's name, and a lad of great promise, they were resolved to give him the best possible education, though they admitted "it must be at some sacrifice, for war-taxes are fearful, and bread is sixteenpence-halfpenny the quartern loaf."

This boy, afterwards Dr. Andrew Reed, was trained for the Christian ministry, and doubtless owed much of the interest he felt through life in the welfare of the orphan to the fact that his own mother had lost both her parents at an early age. He was not long left to pursue his studies alone. The watchmaker had saved money, and come in for a small legacy, so that the school had been given up. But to enable her husband to devote himself to mission work among "the heathen round about them," Mary Ann Reed nobly resolved to go into business on her own account. "I mean," she said, "to give him scope for study, and if I can help it, he shall not take even coach hire from the poor folk he goes to minister unto." The unusual sight was thus presented of father and son poring over the same books, with the same high aim before them. On the Sunday the two would journey out afoot as far as Ponder's End, and after spending the day in

preaching and holding cottage meetings, would return home to receive welcome from her who so willingly spared them for this service.

After a while Andrew Reed the younger became a student at Hackney Theological Seminary, having declined from conscientious reasons an offer of admission to Cambridge under Mr. Simeon. During his college course he developed remarkable powers of preaching, and at its close accepted a call to the pastorate of New Road, the church of which he was already a member. Here he was ordained on the 27th of November, 1811, his twenty-fourth birthday. Five years later he married Eliza, daughter of Mr. Jasper Holmes, of Reading. The issue of this union was five sons and two daughters. The eldest son, Andrew, is still living, after more than forty years of ministerial service; the second, Jasper, died in infancy; while the third was CHARLES REED, the subject of the following pages.

His birth took place on the 20th of June, 1819, at a farmhouse in the village of Sonning, near Henley-on-Thames, where the family were spending the summer. Their settled home was in the East of London, and here the child was baptized in the autumn by the Rev. Matthew Wilks. In

the following spring Mr. Reed felt it necessary to move for a time into the country, that he might secure some relief amid the incessant cares of his city church. He found a retreat to his mind in a roomy trellised cottage at Cheshunt, with windows opening upon a lawn, and surrounded by high elms. The place was within easy distance by stage of London, and to the children it proved an Arcadian bower in which their earliest years were spent.

The simple lessons of a country life were taught them by a wise and gifted mother, aided by Miss Maria Newell, a lady whose talents for teaching were afterwards of eminent service in China, where she became the wife of Dr. Charles Gutzlaff, the missionary. A third influence, not less powerful for good, was that of Mr. Reed's only sister, Martha, who appears from her published life to have been a woman of rare piety and single-heartedness. Her death fell upon the house as a sad interruption of the sunny Cheshunt life, and made a deep impression on the children. She was laid to rest under a yew tree in Cheshunt churchyard, a spot often revisited in later years by her nephews.

Their father was at this time engaged, not only in the oversight of his church, but in

fostering the first of those philanthropic institutions which it was his chief life-work to establish. The London Orphan Asylum, projected in 1813, had been begun on a small scale in a house at Mile End; but by this time it had so grown that a site was taken for it at Clapton, and on this site a large building was in course of erection. The progress of the new asylum made it necessary for its founder to live in the immediate neighbourhood. Accordingly he removed his family from Cheshunt to Hackney. A temporary home was found in Well Street; but it was a gloomy contrast to the freedom of the country, and it was made the more sombre for the children by the sudden death of a little sister. Meanwhile Mr. Reed was building himself a more commodious house at Cambridge Heath, halfway between his church and the Asylum, in an open and agreeable district, from which the likeness of the country had not yet been chased. Every Saturday the boys were taken by their father to Clapton, where they helped him to lay out the grounds, and learnt to make friends of the orphan children.

Hitherto Charles had been taught at home, but now he was despatched to a private school within easy walking distance, called Madras

House, and a year or two later to the Hackney Grammar School, in the establishment of which his father had taken part. Here his troubles began before he reached the doors of learning. On his way from home he became involved in fights with the rough boys of a charity school, who went into the fray with the sense of superior strength. He used to tell in later life how a burly young plebeian captured him one morning and dragged him to the Hackney brook, where he was held ignominiously head downwards until some comrades rescued him from imminent suffocation.

Nor when arrived at school does his experience seem to have been of the happiest. Speaking in 1864 at Coleraine, he said: "Education is not now what it was when I was ten years old. The senseless modes then adopted have passed away. It is now understood that education is not a thing to be driven in at the hands, but that the true avenue is through the heart, which is to be won only by love, and held only by the force of sympathy and kindness."

The shortcomings of school were, however, atoned for by the good which Charles Reed gained from his holidays. These were commonly spent at Blackheath, where his grandparents,

Mr. and Mrs. Holmes, had come to reside. His uncle, Jasper Holmes, was an enthusiastic student of natural science and literature; and in his library and laboratory the boy used to spend hour after hour putting questions, and opening his mind to thoughts and impressions such as the class-room had never suggested. Nor was it a small advantage that these visits introduced him to a godly and well-ordered Church-of-England home. The objection which, as a man, he felt to a State-supported Church, was always accompanied by a recognition of the beautiful lives growing under its shelter, the memories of boyhood unconsciously helping him to maintain catholicity and a generous spirit.

During these early years abundant indications are apparent of that thoroughly healthy disposition which distinguished him through life. He was not a morbid child, nor preternaturally good. The playful humour, which all his friends will remember, began in a strong love of teasing, which brought upon him many reproofs. He was, however, easily led by his parents, and the pictures given by his mother in her *Original Tales* exhibit him and his elder brother as frank and tractable boys.

His first movement towards religious decision

he was wont to trace back to one Sunday evening when his mother had been speaking about his future course, and asking what he meant to be. She read to him the account given by Bunyan of the Interpreter's House:—"So he had him into a private room, and bid his man open a door; the which when he had done, Christian saw the picture of a very grave person hang up against the wall, and this was the fashion of it: it had eyes lifted up to heaven, the best of books in his hand, the law of truth was written upon his lips, the world was behind his back. It stood as if it pleaded with men, and a crown of gold did hang over his head." This picture was henceforth stamped upon the boy's mind. Forty years after, in addressing a congregation of children, he said that it was that evening spent with his mother that witnessed his earliest resolve to be like the man whose picture hung upon the Interpreter's wall.

His father possessed a remarkable power of enlisting men of all grades in any good work on which his own strong will was set, and it was not likely that his children should escape the spell. The whole of Sunday was spent by them at his church, and several hours of the morning and afternoon were given to the schools. Thus, at quite an

early age, Charles was initiated into the teaching of the young. His sister Bessie and he shared the management of a large class of infants, and he notes in a letter with evident pride that two black children were among them, as though these gave scope for specially interesting effort. When the family returned home at night, not much of unbending was allowed; the reading and conversation must be suitable to the sacred character of the day. It is told that, on the eve of a holiday which was to be spent at Blackheath, the brothers went to bed on the Sunday night resolved to keep watch by turns, so as to ensure an early start. The result of loyally observing the rule of the house about "Sunday books" was that the one who had to stay awake till midnight found the page he was reading too strong a soporific, so that the other was never aroused and the plan failed.

At the age of fourteen Charles was sent to school in Yorkshire. The head master of Silcoates, near Wakefield, was the Rev. Ebenezer Miller, an Independent minister who had previously laboured in the East of London; and Mr. Reed felt the utmost confidence in placing his son under his care and that of his excellent wife. When the new boy arrived the love of mischief was strong in

the school, and an amusing incident is recorded in which he took a leading part. The pupils attended on Sunday a neighbouring chapel, and occupied front seats in the gallery. Immediately below them sat a worthy Yorkshireman, whose luxuriant locks agreed so ill with his general maturity of appearance that the boys were tempted to suspect a wig. To test their conjecture, a line with a bent pin at the end was let down during the long prayer, while the victim was devoutly standing, and deftly entangled in his curls. When the prayer was over and he sat down, an indisputable wig was left dangling in mid air. Whether the gallery was cleared history telleth not, but Charles Reed used to admit, even in senatorial days, to the satisfaction he had derived from this piece of successful angling.

His fun had in it, however, nothing of ill-nature or deceit. On the contrary he made a stand for truth, and a letter remains in which he is severely rated by a schoolfellow for having been "so much disgusted and put out" by some trickery in which he had been urged to join. The Rev. J. G. Rogers, one of his companions at Silcoates, says:—"Looking back on those distant days, one feels how true it is that the child is father of the man. The bright and sunny spirit,

the genial and equable temper, the constant activity that was characteristic of his riper years, were with him as a boy."

He appears to have been fonder of natural science than of classics or mathematics. In a lively set of verses which he composed for the school anniversary of 1834, he complains of the ordeal of a public examination—

> "Through all the various studies of the year,
> For Greek and Latin though we don't much care."

English, however, was more to his mind. He contributed regularly to a manuscript magazine called the *Amulet*, a magazine so select that the privilege of reading it was confined to the contributors to its pages; and when he left school the editor sent after him letters, begging him to send some more of his "splendid articles." He chose for the most part historical subjects, and what he wrote was strongly marked by the Liberal opinions he had formed, or imbibed, at home.

His religious convictions were deepened by intercourse with his teachers, and with some of the elder boys, whom he joined in establishing a prayer meeting. But he was brought to decision by the counsels of a devoted American missionary, the Rev. David Abeel. This good man had spent

some weeks as a guest in Dr. Reed's house; and by way of return for the kindness shown him, he determined to visit Silcoates on his journey to Liverpool, and see if he could be of service to his host's son. His earnest counsels prevailed; and when Charles left school a couple of months later and returned to London, his first act was, together with his sister who had been brought under the same influence, to seek admission to his father's church.

By this public step he threw himself into a strong current of religious enthusiasm. While Dr. Reed had been absent in America, engaged in visiting the churches to which he was deputed by the Congregational Union of England and Wales, a movement sprang up among his own people at Wycliffe Chapel which surprised him on his return by its force and genuineness. His own ministry assumed a deeper tone, and large additions were made to the church. In the following spring (1835) a return deputation from America visited England; and as its members stayed under Dr. Reed's roof, Charles and his sister were thrown into the society of men like Dr. Gardiner Spring and others, who encouraged them in the resolutions they were forming. In their father's church they found a sphere for immediate work,

the duty assigned to Charles being that of looking after the young men of the congregation.

Under these circumstances it is not strange that he should have cherished the purpose of becoming a minister of the Gospel. One of his best friends, Miss Hannah Rawson, of Leeds, says to him in a letter, dated December 1, 1835: "Your hesitation as to preparing for the ministry does not surprise me. In deciding on so important a question, you have every advantage to assist your judgment, from the experience of so eminent and successful a pastor as your father; and whatever may be your determination, I have no doubt you will be guided aright, from the self-distrust expressed in your letter." This mistrust of himself was the reason that led him to abandon his intention; though more than once, and particularly at the time of his brother Andrew's ordination, he recurred to it. Possessed as he certainly was of many qualities which go to make a useful minister, it may yet be doubted whether he would have been able in any pulpit to render as valuable service to his generation as he did render in the varied walks of social influence which are open to a Christian layman.

A trace of this desire of his youth may be found in the high regard in which he always held the office of a religious teacher. Critical remarks about ministers or sermons he invariably checked in the family circle; and in the choice of profession for his sons he was anxious that they should fairly weigh the claims of the ministry. Thus to one he writes at the new year: "You are in young life and health, and these early years come and go rapidly, and are charged with little care; but this one must give to you and us more than ordinary anxiety. In it you must make choice of your future work, and this is one of the greatest acts of the brief space called life. This work may be found in the world as well as in the Church; but while one is the entire consecration of the time to religious duties, the other is the daily discharge of Christian obligations amid the engagements of honourable business. You have the choice before you: I can open the way for you in business, or I can give you the education you require for the ministry."

After about a year and a half at home, during which time Charles Reed attended lectures at University College, he returned to the North. In December, 1836, his father apprenticed him to a

firm of woollen manufacturers in Leeds. For the first two years of his time he was put in charge of their mill at Kirkstall, and was occupied from early morning till late at night with the roughest details of the work. As he afterwards told the young men of Leeds, "he could put in a weft as well as any man in his workshop, though in his day it was always in a hand-loom." It was in skating round the mill one winter's night to see that all was secure that he sustained a severe fall, breaking the bridge of his nose, though not in a way to mar the effect of his naturally well-formed features.

In his scanty leisure he took delight in exploring the neighbouring abbey, clambering with sure foot among its ivy-covered ruins, and engaged sometimes in reconstructing the haunts of the old monks, and anon in building the less substantial castle of his own fortunes. At such moments he commonly sought to express his thoughts in verse; for this practical youth had a romantic side to his character, and many a sheet he filled—some, perhaps, would say spoiled—with the results of these solitary musings. But his mind was always active, and his aspirations pure.

When he was transferred to another large mill in the town, belonging to the same firm, the social

side of his nature had more room to develop, and he at once undertook Christian work in connexion with the church of the Rev. John Ely. Charles Reed became a zealous teacher in his Sunday school, and in 1837 joined with others to invite to Leeds David Nasmyth, the well-known promoter of young men's societies. He was also one of the secretaries of the Leeds Literary Institution, afterwards amalgamated with the Mechanics' Institute.

Literature and politics claimed at this time much of his thought. A magazine called the *Leeds Repository* was started in 1839, of which he and his friend Thomas Edward Plint were joint editors; and to this he contributed many articles showing freshness of mind and breadth of sympathy, though amid undeniable juvenilities. When Cobden and Bright were engaged in their crusade against the corn laws, Charles Reed was honoured by some personal notice from the former, who instructed his eager young disciple on certain perplexed questions, to his infinite pride and delight. Throwing himself into the stir of public life, he was found in 1841 working night and day for Lord Morpeth, when that nobleman, who had so admirably represented the West Riding, was unexpectedly defeated at the poll.

During his residence in Leeds the young apprentice had formed many friendships; for, as all those who knew him will believe, he carried his passport on his countenance. There were families into which he had been received when at Silcoates, such as the Rawsons and Claphams of Leeds, and the Taylors of Bradford; and amongst all these he was a welcome visitor, spending with them such evening hours as he could rescue from the claims of philanthropic and literary labour. It was not, however, in the sympathy of any of these, invaluable as he felt it to be, that he found courage to bear up against repeated disappointments in his business prospects. The light of an early hope shone steadily within his heart; and while he spoke of it as his guiding star, it may be said that no needle could be truer to its point than was he to the object of his love. Through seven long years of gleam and shade he waited for the hand of Margaret, youngest daughter of Mr. Edward Baines, the senior member for Leeds —years beginning with vacation Sundays, when, as a school-boy, he gazed across the dreamy breadth of the quaint old chapel to what he then considered the inaccessible state of her father's pew, and reaching to the eve of his departure from Leeds. During the latter part of the time

nothing hindered but his inability to find a settlement in the cloth trade of the North. Amid "suspense, agonizing suspense," one opening after another closed before him, like delusive lanes of water before an Arctic navigator; and at last, through no fault of his own, he was obliged to turn his steps southwards, and reconcile himself to the cheerless prospect of searching for work in London. What wonder then at his ecstasy when, instead of the torch being snatched from his hand and his soul being plunged in darkness, he was allowed to grasp and hold it high? "She is mine," he writes to his elder brother and life-long friend, "mine for ever; her decision was made in the hour of my deepest sorrow, when all prospect of settlement was removed. Is not this nobility?"

CHAPTER II.

DAYS OF TOIL AND THE DAY OF REST.

> " Where holy ground begins, unhallowed ends,
> Is marked by no distinguishable line ;
> The turf unites, the pathways intertwine."

> " We are . . . to conceive of religion as . . . the sun of the soul, first gilding the mountain heights of reason and conscience, but shining more and more until the whole surface of our life reflects its light, and the most humble and hidden places revive and rejoice in the enlivening rays."

THE first half of 1842 was spent by Charles Reed in fruitless search for a business. Offers were not lacking, but either they were not to his taste or they could not bear inquiry. At last, however, a partnership was found which promised well; and in July appeared the prospectus of the firm of Tyler and Reed, printers, of Bolt Court.

This modest tributary of Fleet Street was at that time the scene of considerable literary

activity. It was the head-quarters of influential organs belonging to the Nonconformists; and in the editors' rooms there used to gather a number of men of ability and keen interest in public life, from whose conversation the young printer learnt much. He was able also to contribute his share to the symposia; for his opinions had, as we have seen, been formed and tested in the robust school of the North, and he could give them frank and vigorous expression.

After a couple of years of bachelor life, spent under his father's roof at Cambridge Heath, he went down to Yorkshire to claim his bride. The marriage took place on the 22nd May, 1844, and a few weeks later Charles and Margaret Reed took possession of their home in New Broad Street. The respectability of that quarter of the City of London had not as yet been disturbed; but it was undeniably dull, and could be regarded only as a temporary abode. It was brightened by the frequent visits of Mr. and Mrs. Baines of Leeds; and for their daughter it possessed the recommendation of being near enough to her husband's place of business to admit of his dining at home in the middle of the day.

Their eldest child was born in the summer of 1845; but a long and dangerous illness, from

which he suffered, affected the health of both parents so severely that they felt it necessary to remove into the suburbs. A house was found in St. Thomas's Square, Hackney, which answered the requirements of the family, and served as their home for twenty years. It was quiet and old-fashioned, with enough of unused space to encourage the acquisitive habits of an antiquary, who was always picking up bargains in the shape of old books and prints, autographs, armour, pottery, and the like—all needing to be housed until the time for "weeding" and "arranging" should come. Modern furniture he abjured; but if he could plan bits of old oak-carving into a sideboard, or make a table out of the timbers of the old Guildhall, or adorn the garden with a sarcophagus found in the Lea valley, his soul was satisfied; his rest, he maintained, did him twice the good if taken in a chair worked by Anne Boleyn or bearing Cromwell's initials.

The situation of his house, flanked by two burial-grounds, occasionally awakened remonstrance from his friends; but the young people kept the best of health despite their surroundings, and only knew that the sacred soil was favourable to the growth of fruits pleasant to themselves and of leaves dear to their silk worms

Though their father was prevented by long hours in town from being much at home, he encouraged them in every out-door sport, and was never too tired to hear the account of their latest feats in the gymnasium, or of the "stout-bodied moths" they had found in their expeditions to the Forest.

The first winter in the new home was saddened by the death of an infant daughter named Edith Margaret, who was laid beneath the snow in Abney Park one January day in 1849. This was the only bereavement in the immediate family for more than twenty-five years; but then three of its members were called away in quick succession.

In the education of their children, Charles and Margaret Reed shrank equally from the narrowness of private tuition and from the perils of boarding schools. They were particularly anxious to keep their boys under home influence, and deemed themselves fortunate in finding an excellent day school in Clapton, with the principals of which they were in complete accord. Both here, and at the City of London School to which the boys were afterwards sent, a healthy spirit prevailed; there was the necessary amount of friction and competition, while at the same time the parents were able, by daily intercourse with

their children, to keep the ice of reserve from forming upon the waters of the family life. Two of the lads found their father one evening asleep in his study, and left on the table a little note, in which were scrawled in rude text-hand the words—"We will help you when you are old, if all's right." This paper he put carefully by, with the note, "Written by my dear lads on a night when, overpressed with work, I had fallen asleep in my chair."

To be overpressed with anxiety, as well as work, was a common experience during those early years of married life. Trials and reverses in business befell him which sorely taxed his courage. Though not very willing to bring his troubles home, he was wise enough to have no secrets from his wife, and in her sympathy and counsel he found strength. In 1849 he dissolved his connexion with Mr. Tyler, and joined Mr. Benjamin Pardon, of Hatton Garden, also a printer. The new firm removed to Lovell's Court, Paternoster Row, where by dint of unflagging exertions a good position was by degrees secured. Still the strain of heavy hours and fierce competition continued year after year, so that in 1861 Charles Reed was ready for another change. The retirement of his friend Alderman

Besley from the type-founding business made an opening of which, through the kindness of some of his relatives, he was able to avail himself, and he immediately began to breathe more freely. His sons were now growing to an age when they could give him help; and he was thus in a position to liberate himself, not for repose, but for the demands of public service that had begun to press upon him.

For a long time after his removal to Hackney he kept up his membership with the church over which his father had for nearly forty years presided. Accompanied by his wife and elder children, he used to take the long walk to Whitechapel for the purpose of attending the Communion, which was observed on the first Sunday evening of the month. This service, as the members of Wycliffe know, was singularly impressive. The body of the church was completely filled with the communicants, numbering nearly a thousand, while the spectators, hardly less numerous, crowded the galleries. In the midst stood the venerable minister, calm in manner though often deeply moved, and swaying the whole congregation at will by his authoritative and impassioned appeals. More people, he

used to say, were brought to Christian resolve through that service than by any other agency of the church; and many are still living who can testify to the effect produced both on the timid and the indifferent by witnessing that great company of avowed believers, and listening to the soul-stirring words of their leader.

The church usually attended by Charles Reed was the Old Gravel Pit, Hackney, of which Dr. John Pye Smith, a close and honoured connexion of his wife's family, was pastor. Acute in controversy, yet of guileless and most gentle nature, this universally beloved and saintly man—a true "angel" of the Church—had gathered about him an influential congregation. His successor, the Rev. John Davies, was too retiring to be very widely known; but amongst his people, and others who could discern true genius, he was regarded with the warmest admiration and affection. Charles Reed's note-books are full of jottings of his sermons, in which the quaintness of a Puritan divine was blended with epigram and original observations, such as could come only from a powerful and vigilant mind. For more than twenty years Charles Reed found it his unfailing refreshment and privilege to worship in this church; and when in 1871 the congregation

removed to a new building in Clapton Park, he migrated with it. Its later pastors, Dr. James Spence and the Rev. Samuel Hebditch, were among his much valued friends, and at the request of the latter he consented to undertake the office of deacon, from which he had preferred hitherto to hold himself free.

His Sunday afternoon was generally devoted to visiting schools and addressing children; but a part was spent in his own family, where he sought to make the day not the gloomiest but the happiest of the week. One who sometimes stayed at his house says:—"Those first days of the week were truly Lord's Days. From early morning till the evening, a subdued yet joyous atmosphere pervaded the home. He and his on the day of rest—husband, wife, children, servants, meeting in a worshipping circle—these are recollections which abide in our minds."

At the same time he refrained from judging those whose views of the Sabbath differed from his own. To one of his sons at Cambridge, who had sent him an account of preparations for the May Races, he replied:—"We all rejoice to hear of the success of your boat. I am a little doubtful as to your Sunday morning training breakfast, unless the rest of the men are like A——, which

is hardly likely. You can best judge, but I think the intercourse may be unfriendly to the true spirit of worship."

His decision of character was recognised by many who had little sympathy with his religious principles. While *in* the world as completely as any of the men around him, they could not help acknowledging that he was not *of* the world. In his friends he excited no common enthusiasm. One who knew him for thirty years says:—"I looked up to him as one of the few typical men who go far to realise what floats before my mind as the ideal of what a man should be—a servant of God but also a servant of his country, working for the good of the city here which is not abiding, while vividly conscious of his higher citizenship in the city which hath foundations." He often spoke, both in public and private, of the advantage he had found in early nailing his colours to the mast, and letting no one be in doubt as to his nationality and destination. A letter to one of his sons contains this passage:—

"Our opportunities of intercourse at home are so frequent that we do not perhaps converse enough on the best things; and now, when you are away

from us, I feel prompted to put the question which I have often desired to press upon you. You have shown your interest in religion and religious work; you are now at an age to judge and act for yourself; is there any reason why you should not avow what I hope is your secret faith? The young man in the *Pilgrim's Progress* made his way to the table at the foot of the tower and said, 'Write my name in that book,' and this is the declaration I want you to make, if your heart is inclined to do so. Do not misunderstand the act; it is not an avowal of holiness, it is the very reverse, but at the same time the sense of unworthiness should not hinder. Such profession is due to God, as it is just to yourself. You want to give Him your best service, and your example is of great value; you wish to be aided by His strength; He honours them who honour Him; you will be a better son, a better brother, a better man of business—better for this life and better for ever by an open confession of love to Christ."

The following lines, written later in life, show the basis that underlay his business career, and the pure source whence he fed activities so many and so varied as to surprise those who knew him

only in public. When on a visit to the North, he was suddenly recalled to London by a summons which left him no choice but to travel up on the Sunday night. He borrowed from his hostess a copy of the *Christian Year*, and wrote within the cover the thoughts born of the journey:—

"This book,
So kindly lent, is gratefully returned.
Forgotten lines now happily relearned,
Memories awakened which had long since slept,
And vows remembered that have not been kept;
Musings, on earth's fair scenes of sweet delight
And my own home, made short this Sabbath night;
Some resolutions for a holier life,
Some courage gained for daily Christian strife,
Some high content 'mid growing public cares,
Some sweet confiding trust and humble prayers;
Some glimpses of a nobler life to come,
Some foresight of the light beyond the tomb.
"Lady, may it through coming years be thine,
Hearts to lift up, as this night thou hast mine!"

CHAPTER III.

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

"I stand
And work among Christ's little ones, content."

"LET me show," said Charles Reed in 1878, "what an enormous national advantage has been gained by the introduction and working of the British Sunday School. I would ask, is it nothing that some hundreds of thousands of teachers are engaged every Sabbath in instructing children drawn, for the most part, from humbler classes than themselves? Is it nothing that the barriers of rank are broken down? Is it nothing that the rich man's daughter comes from her home, and sits in the school surrounded by the poorest children from the humblest districts? Is it nothing that sympathies, which would be hardened and closed up but for these little ones,

soften and expand till they form a centre of interest and attraction to the youth of our better classes? . . . . Who keeps this country in order, whether in city, town, or village? Not the few policemen. No! the people are their own police. I greatly mistake if the law-abiding spirit of our people has not sprung very much from the influence and teaching given in the Sunday Schools of the land."

Then, after affirming the service rendered by the institution in checking the taste for foul literature, combating intemperance, and curbing the appetite for war, he continued:—

"Have we no thanks to render to the Sunday School for the part she has played in the cause of national education? When the nation neglected its duty, and could not or did not form any system of instruction for the children of the land; who instructed them how to read the Word of God? It was the teachers of the Sunday School who, in addition to giving the scholars that religious instruction which was their proper duty, gave them enough of secular knowledge to enable them to read the Bible. The nation, I venture to say, owes to the Sunday School a deep debt of gratitude

for the work she has done during the last fifty years for the cause of popular education."

It would have been strange if the son of Andrew Reed had not developed a love for such work. As far back as 1800 his father had been a teacher at Scotland Green, near Enfield. Summer and winter he trudged out from the city, halting on his way at Edmonton, where breakfast was provided for him in a cottage, and then walking on to the school, which he reached at nine o'clock, accompanied by a group of children whom he drew from their homes as he passed. When this earnest youth became minister of a church, he naturally made the training of the little ones his concern, and the members of his own family were early enlisted in the Sunday School.

Charles is said to have tried his hand first upon a large class of infants taught by Mrs. Bullen, a lady of unusual powers and the mother of distinguished children. Whether she followed a hint given by Dr. Reed, or whether she was a believer in Abernethy's methods, it appears that the first time Charles and his sister came into the room she turned over to them the entire management of the class and declined to give them any aid. Her visitors were sorely disconcerted; but

there was nothing for it but to pluck up courage and go through with the dreaded task. They succeeded better than they had feared; and, once made, the effort was never again so formidable. If you would learn to swim, said Charles Reed in after life, don't hire a bathing machine and corks, but get a sailor to row you out of your depth and make you leap overboard with a line round your chest; and to those who sought confidence in public speaking he advised a similar bold plunge.

While he was serving as an apprentice in Leeds, and at work till midnight on the Saturday, he was yet punctual at the Salem School next morning, and the afternoon found him in his place again. For he had a strong objection to the "half-time system," and would never believe that a class conducted by two independent teachers could yield as good results as one for which a single teacher held himself responsible. He lived to see the spread of what he regarded as the more indolent and less satisfactory system; and still more did he regret the decadence of the morning school, experience assuring him that in the forenoon the minds of teacher and scholar alike were most active and susceptible.

In 1839 he was made secretary of the Leeds Sunday School Union, a well-organized body, and

one which gathered in reports from numerous branches, some of them bearing suggestive names, such as Bethel Bank, Joy's Field, and Sodom! In the autumn of 1840 he brought his friend, the Rev. John Curwen, down to Yorkshire to lecture on Sunday School methods, and accompanied him on a visit to several of the West Riding towns.

After his marriage he joined the Committee of the Sunday School Union in London, and through it came into contact with schools all over the country. The work of this Union Committee he held in the highest honour. It was purely voluntary; it was rendered by men of business who could call few hours their own; the funds at their disposal were not large, nor could they, with justice to the churches, exercise any direct authority over their constituents; yet by their steadfastness and generous purpose they had won the confidence of innumerable churches belonging to various denominations, and were the acknowledged leaders of schools containing over a million children. To be staff officer in an army like this he considered a great privilege, and it was an office which he retained, despite the demands it involved on his time, to the end of life.

There are probably few of the larger towns in

England that do not preserve some recollection of a visit from Charles Reed on Sunday School business, when "the London deputation" pleasantly disappointed his audiences by turning out to be more sprightly and much less wooden than deputations are commonly supposed to be. His pocket-books abound with sketches of such visits; though, as might be expected, they show rather what capital people he met on his travels than what he himself contributed to the entertainment in the way of geniality and practical sense.

One Whitsuntide, for example, he went on behalf of the Union into Somerset. "Transported from the heart of London, at the end of my week's work, I found myself in a few hours the sole occupant of a pretentious little omnibus, rattling over Taunton Bridge." On the Sunday he set himself to make the acquaintance, not only of the schools, but of the dwellings from which the scholars came. He was surprised to see the children flocking out of squalid "colleges," as their homes were called, yet in appearance fresh and tidy. Though Whitsunday was a bad day for observing the regular order of the schools, he went from one to another, gratified to note the large proportion of elder scholars. "Passing through the class-rooms of one school, to the

number of twenty-one, I saw that they were filled with young people of from sixteen to twenty years of age, while there were many fathers and mothers, with children of their own, who evidently had no intention of leaving teachers and studies so much endeared to them. I said to a friend, 'These are workshops indeed.' 'You may well call them so,' he replied, 'for I dare say there is not one in which the work of the Holy Spirit has not been made manifest.'"

Whitmonday brought a conference, attended by teachers from all parts of the West of England, which "the deputation" had to open. At its close, a model class was conducted in public, and Charles Reed was surprised to hear the teacher in charge of it acknowledge that his own devotion to the work was due to an appeal which their visitor of that day had made in Bristol fifteen years before. The afternoon was spent in further conference; and then came the great evening meeting, over which he had to preside. After so tiring a day, he felt that wordy resolutions and long speeches would be intolerable; so he announced himself to be armed with dictatorial power, said he should call on whom he pleased, and expect obedience in the shape of the briefest speeches. "The plan was met good-humouredly

by ministers and laymen, who would otherwise have spoken half an hour each, but who did speak only a very few minutes, giving us a series of most interesting and earnest little addresses, which delighted the audience, and kept up the spirit of the meeting to its close."

In the year 1851 he wrote an essay on *The Infant Class in the Sunday School*, which took the first prize offered by the London Union. He was impelled to this task partly by a desire to meet a most unjust charge that had appeared in a recent Government report, where it was stated that "in all the factory districts great numbers of children, who had been in regular attendance at Sunday School for five, six, or even nine years," were found on examination to be "not only altogether ignorant of Christian principles, but to know nothing whatever of the events of Scripture history." At the same time, he could not repel this accusation without admitting a partial failure of the Sunday School system, owing to the great mistake, as he considered it, of "limiting the invitation to children of seven and eight years of age;" and he asked whether the result of this exclusion of the little ones had not been to leave multitudes of children untaught, and greatly to

increase the difficulty of dealing with those who were in the schools.

The essay is written with a degree of sympathy that betokens an author thoroughly at home with his subject. For corporal punishment he could find no place; such chastisement might crush, it could never amend. No teacher, in his opinion, needed to resort to physical force, seeing that a loving heart could exert a far more powerful influence. Nor had he any patience with the demands often made by the Church upon the attendance and attention of the young at services designed for adults. "Children, if uninterested, will be unruly. We require them to be idle and quiet at the same time. It is impossible: any enforcement of such a law must render the state of the children one of complete misery."

During the ten years that followed the publication of this essay, no subject engaged more thought among Sunday School workers than the development of infant classes. That this was due to the plea he had advanced, Charles Reed was too modest to affirm; but in a later edition of the essay he expressed his joy at observing that what had been an almost unknown adjunct of the school was now recognised as one of its most necessary and promising departments.

Amongst his papers has been found one on the same topic which is worth noticing, since the rules he there lays down are the same that guided him when he came to be occupied in the work of the London School Board. Education, he held, began with infancy. In the quaint words of Roger Ascham, whom he was fond of quoting, "the pure, clean will of a sweet young babe is like the newest wax, most able to receive the best and fairest printing, and like a new, bright silver dish, to receive and keep any good thing put into it." Early training, again, must be of the simplest kind. "If you begin by teaching creeds and catechisms, or even texts of Scripture, before you excite ideas, you do manifold harm; you present no images of love and beauty to fill the heart, and you leave no impression but one of weariness at listening to your unintelligible words. First comes the discipline of the affections; then that of the memory."

He was a strong advocate for allowing liberty to the teacher. "Give him power to order his own little society. One teacher is usually enough. Monitors are useless, save for the purpose of being trained themselves. They seldom help, more often they embarrass; a quick-speaking eye, ranging over the room, is more effective than

many hands — hands which can scarcely touch without inflicting pain, and which rarely put to rights without leaving all wrong." He believed in the capacity of female teachers, provided gentleness were accompanied by energy; slowness in a teacher was fatal, for "in this college there is no chair." Once more he was opposed to overdoing it. "To overload a field with seed is simply to feed the fowls. Be sparing even of your anecdotes, and bring them in only when they are wanted; don't make a door on purpose to fit a door-plate."

Thus twenty years before School Boards were invented, Charles Reed was actively engaged in the work of education, with ideas that had borne the test of experience, and the sympathy of a heart that had not grown, and was not to grow, old. On the first Sunday of each month he gave an address to the school connected with his own church at Hackney; almost every week his home had to spare him for the visitation of schools in London or the country; and to the end of life he was ready to plead for an institution which, as he then said, had always lain nearest his heart.

In 1852 he read a paper before the Union on *The Census and Sunday Schools*, in which he

urged the establishment of separate services for very young scholars, and of a higher kind of instruction for those above fourteen years of age. In 1853, 1859, and 1860 he addressed the Congregational Union of England and Wales on various aspects of the Sunday School question. On the last-named occasion the meeting was held at Blackburn, and he made it his aim to show the part which Lancashire had taken in the movement, and the changes that were then passing over it. In the North, he said, the Sunday School is a grander thing than we find it in the South; "it is a thing of the *people* rather than of the *poor;* it lives in the affections, and does not struggle for existence among unfriendly influences; and it presses into its service a higher class of teaching power than can be obtained with ease elsewhere. The greatest change," he continued, "which has taken place in the history of the Sunday School was its becoming a voluntary institution, whereas in its origin it connected work with wages. . . . . At Stockport, in 1784, teachers were paid eighteenpence a day, and at this rate it may be fairly assumed that the Sunday School budget of 1860 would require a sum of 989,000*l.* Let the men of Oldham take the glory which belongs to their town, for it was

an Oldham teacher whose pious heart was first prompted to do good, 'hoping for nothing again.'

"Though this example found many followers, the Sunday School did not at once become a religious institution; it took long years to convince even its noble voluntary supporters that *conversion* was the great aim of the teacher. For a long period its religious character was sacrificed to secular work. Upon the plea of necessity, reading, writing, and arithmetic were taught, a deference for religion being shown by the selection of Scripture texts for copies; while even sums were done, we are told, 'upon religious principles.'

"We are just now in the transition state. With the bonnets and tippets, and other badges of charity, have gone the alphabets, the primers, the spelling and the lesson books in endless variety; we have done with the drudgery of secular teaching; for the day school is doing its own work, and entering upon its legitimate province; and the Sabbath School is now vindicating its complete right to be designated a religious institution."

Two New Year addresses from his pen attained a wide circulation, though their titles will scarcely

now be remembered. One was called *The Teacher's Keys;* the other, prepared for scholars, was entitled *Diamonds in the Dust.* The latter contains a little autobiographical sketch which may serve to illustrate the work he was accustomed to do, and his style when addressing the young.

"In the dust of poverty and humble life, in many a city cellar, in many a ship's hold, in the rustic's cot or the mud hovel; in the virtuous life of men and women, in the earnest, truthful, and Christ-fearing life of little children, many, many precious stones send forth into this dark world their gleaming lustrous light.

"Such an one was my treasure some years ago when I had a class in the North of England, in the land of collieries. 'Teacher, you don't come to see me,' said George, as he heard me promising to take tea the next day with one of my scholars whose parents had sent me an invitation. I saw an arch look on the lad's face, and replied, 'How can I, George, when you live under ground?' I said no more; but knowing the pleasure a surprise would give him, one day I walked out to the coal-pit where he was employed, and asked leave to go down. Work was just over for the day, and the manager said, if I liked to try it, I was welcome; he advised me, however, to change my clothes

before the bucket came up, and then promised to send a miner down with me. It soon came out that he knew I was a teacher in the school to which George went; and as George was one of the boys selected, on account of good conduct, to attend to visitors, a signal was sent down the pit to tell him that he was to be in readiness. In due time up came the bucket, and, there not being a minute to spare, I and the foreman jumped in as it swung round, and seizing upon the great rope by which we were to be suspended in our descent to the lower earth, I held fast enough, I assure you. In an instant we were rapidly descending the shaft of the pit, jolting roughly against its coal-black side, and jerking downwards with a terrible unsteadiness. All below was deep darkness; above, the great round hole at the pit's mouth had diminished already to the size of a chimney-pot, and presently it looked like a large star.

"Presently a speck of light appeared below, and my companion struck two blows on an iron rod, and these vibrations going down to the bottom told how many were coming. It was George's hand that received the message, and with the other one he held out his lamp to guide me, as I felt the bottom and wondered what to do.

'Here's a hand, sir.' It was something in that dark and suffocating region to hear any voice, but to feel the warm rough hand of a poor scholar, as it helped me out of the bucket, was pleasant indeed. I need not tell you of our surprise and joy, and I have not room to tell you what the boy showed me as we wandered along those rough galleries, hewn out in the solid coal.

"'How are we to get back?' I said. 'Oh, teacher, there's a way up where we hand and foot it;' and, looking, I saw the holes cut, but even then it seemed that I could never climb in that fashion. Still following George, I found him standing with his light in his hand in the middle of the large vault, which had a low seat all round, cut in the coal. 'This is where we have our reading and learning class after work hours, teacher, and there's a good lot of us works in relays, and we turn down here when our off hours are on.' I could scarcely believe ears or eyes, but I listened as George proceeded, 'There's scarce one who don't like to have reading, for it's dull enough down here. The men talk and sing songs, and go up at night, most ways; but we go up Saturdays and Mondays. There's no swearing, and not much drinking; and smoking is denied, so they takes to chewing tobacco and singing, and we

lads who can, read in turns; and they're real fond of our lib'ries.' 'Oh, the library books,' I said; 'that is right.' 'Yes; we take turn about at the candle, and they's rare fond of singing. We sing, "Glory," "Round the Throne," "Happy Land," and "Hand in Hand,"—that's a Primitive's one, for we've all sorts, but it's all one and the same like here. And there's no chaffin' and larkin', as you'd suppose; it's as quiet as Sunday. We've just finished *John Williams*, and *Moffat's* done, so one of our lads' mothers is going to lend a book about Greenlanders she got from Fulneck School.' 'Oh,' I said, 'the Moravian Mission, I dare say.' 'Yes,' said George, 'we give them Moravians a share at quarter days; one of our men is a local preacher, and he shares the missionary money. See here, teacher; you wouldn't think what this is.' To my astonishment he showed me in the wall a slit plastered up all round, and chalked white all over, and the words cut with a knife, 'MISHONERY BOX.' 'This is where we collect for all of them, and when New Year's Day comes in we share it out. There's a deal of Methodists, and some Primitives, and some that's nothing; but it's all the same to us, we let it go share and share alike, only we like to hear at odd times what comes of the money.'

"I looked round upon the scene, and blessed God with all my heart for what I saw and heard. Here was a little band of poor boys, deprived of the light of heaven, working like young slaves in a deep, dark, horrible pit; some lying half the day on their backs, in the narrowest openings, to hack out the coal for the men; others filling up the sieves, so that the dust might be screened off before the coal went up to the pit's mouth. This pit was not so deep as some; there was more air than many enjoyed, for the owner was both humane and generous, and spared no pains to secure the health and comfort of his workpeople; still, with all this, how could they live where I could scarcely breathe, and live so contentedly, spending the dull, monotonous hours in study and self-improvement? I had little thought that my poor colliery boy, so regular in his class on the only day he could call his own, was doing there, in his own humble way, the work of the living missionary. Surely here, amid the dull world of coal in this subterranean cavern, I had found in the dust a bright and flashing diamond of greater worth than the Koh-i-noor or the wonderful jewel of Portugal.

"Again and again I looked at the rough-hewn money-box. I had not a word to say about the

spelling,—that was bad enough;—but the tears sprang to my eyes, and grateful joy filled up my heart when I looked my boy in the face, and said, with my hand upon his shoulder, 'God bless you, my lad; He will own this work, and though it is unknown by the great societies to whom you send your share of hard-earned savings, it is surely seen by Him whose eyes are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.'

"George is now a viewer, a man respected and trusted; he visits many pits, and he has done more good than I can tell in improving the condition of colliery boys in and around his district.

"Such diamonds shine out, not only in the dark places under the surface, but everywhere where brave and pious hearts are beating with love for Christ and a desire to do His gracious, merciful, and earnest work. The little cheerful helper in the house, the one who 'minds baby,' or tends the overwrought sick mother; the lad who becomes the bread-winner for a family, left orphans in helpless childhood; the lonely widow, the hopeless incurable;—go in and inquire into the history of their striving, enduring, and patient lives, and you shall find that the gloom of affliction and trouble only sets off the lustre of these gems."

A subsequent chapter will show that Charles Reed did not forget the Sunday School when he entered Parliament, but that his first effort there was to secure for it exemption from rating. His home was always open to foreigners connected with Sunday Schools abroad, and his short holidays at Easter and Whitsuntide were still placed at the disposal of the Union Committee for the visitation of provincial schools.

In the celebration of the Centenary of Sunday Schools, the year before his death, he took the deepest interest. The position of treasurer and chairman of the Sunday School Union, which he occupied at the time, naturally threw upon him a leading part in the movement; but the sympathy he gave it was far from being official. The history of Robert Raikes had long been his study; he looked on him as a benefactor whose services, like those of William Tyndale, had never been properly acknowledged; and he therefore embraced eagerly the opportunity afforded by the Centenary to get a tardy act of justice done. In the course of his researches he came upon original letters of Raikes which enabled him to prove that, while children had been gathered for instruction before the year 1780, it was then first that the

idea of doing this on a large scale was conceived. Speaking at the great Centenary meeting held in Gloucester on the 9th July, 1880, he gave the following account of the event commemorated :—

"We celebrate to-day two victories, both achieved by your distinguished citizen, Robert Raikes. The one is a triumph over ignorance and vice, the other a victory over prejudice and bigotry. Raikes was born in a century of gloom and disaster. In 1760, when he was twenty-five, famine prices ruled, grinding taxes bore down the people, the workhouses were full, gaols were crammed, executions were plentiful, and ruin stared the nation in the face. Raikes had a benevolent heart; he visited the prisons of Gloucester, received John Howard as his guest, and set himself to ameliorate the condition of young criminals. The almanacs of the day were the common vehicles of public instruction, and I find the following in *Moore's* for 1780—

> "'For God and your poor pining country's sake
> Avoid the danger, and new measures take;
> Then shall we hope to see Heaven's harmless dove
> Bring us the olive branch of peace and love,
> Religion flourish, and all know full well
> This is the land where God delights to dwell.'

These lines are remarkable, and so is the astrological prediction as to the influence of this year, in these words:—'And the month ends with smiles from Heaven upon the endeavours of deserving men who labour to do good in their generation.' Certainly that was true of the man of 1780, though he was no doubt ignorant of the prediction. An errand of business takes him to St. Catherine Street; he engages in conversation with an inhabitant about the wild condition of the children. She invites him to come again on Sunday. He sees for himself, and says, 'Can nothing be done?' The poor woman tells of Mr. Stock's day school, and deplores the want of something like it on the Sunday. Raikes says, 'I will try.'

"Well do we honour the memory of James and Mary King and the first teachers of that cottage school, whose names are now familiar to the public; for from that pattern the Sunday School became a powerful institution, watched over by Raikes for years, and producing such good influence in the town as to give rise to the local proverb, 'As sure as there's a God in Gloucester.' A Gloucester man, under the signature of 'A lover of virtue,' writes on November 25th, 1784, to Mr. Sylvanus Urban,

gentleman, London (the editor of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, then a leading periodical), an account of the first institution of Sunday Schools, inclosing a letter from Mr. Raikes, of Gloucester, on his new and excellent scheme of Sunday Schools. He says, 'It is one very direct means of bringing about the reformation of manners which is so much wanted at present.' I am fortunate enough to have that letter, and one other, giving an account in later years of Raikes's visit to Windsor. Raikes never claimed to have established the first Sunday School, and it is certain that he could not do so. . . .

"But we celebrate a second victory. Raikes saw from the first that his work would be stayed if his Church preferences stood in the way. A boy in his school was reported to have left because his parents were Dissenters, and they found that the Catechism was taught. He would not allow him to be thus driven away. William King, of Dursley, walked his thirty-two miles in and out of Gloucester to consult as to the Dissenters, and Raikes said, though it would spoil the scheme to let them be too prominent, he should work with them for all that. Raikes succeeded because he allowed no question of class to interfere. He did not flout the common people,

but remembered the injunction, 'Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate.' It is known that he was greatly grieved with the indifference of the bishops, and remonstrated with them. They openly assailed the new institution, and many of the clergy echoed the cry, 'Refrain from these men.' Rowland Hill, who established four schools in London, wrote an apology for Sunday Schools, but it was of no use. The secret objection was that it was a lay institution, and the schools were denounced as 'schools of atheism and disloyalty, in which the minds of the children of the very lowest orders are enlightened, that is to say, taught to despise religion, the laws, and all subordination.'

"Thus the Sunday School was laid hold of by the Dissenters, and in their hands it became a thing of power, which in after years being seen, the Dean of Lincoln addressed his counsel to the clergy thus: 'Divine Providence seems to have pointed out a measure to counteract Sabbath breaking, a first step in national guilt. The measure, which appears to me to possess this invaluable antidote to the poisonous manners of this depraved age, is the establishment of Sunday Schools.' Following this, an organized deputation was received by the then Archbishop of

Canterbury in London, and it was agreed 'that Sunday Schools are adapted to improve the morals of the common people.' Raikes plaintively says in 1794, 'What are we to do? For the education of the dense mass of the people no provision is made. That class has drifted out of the cognisance of the Church. The charity and free schools are organized on too narrow a scale. My Sunday School has just begun to be known, and the only real teachers are the Methodists.'

"Raikes was a lover of Christian union. His descendant spoke truly in this city, when he said that 'Robert Raikes was less conspicuous as an eminent and devoted Churchman than as an active friend of the Nonconformists.' Yes, he was an eminent and catholic Christian; and the words of the Archbishop of Canterbury last week in the Guildhall of London, truly described his spirit as the spirit by which in these celebrations we should be actuated. Many cities claimed Homer as their townsman; the whole world claims Raikes as its benefactor. Twelve millions of children this year will hear his name. Let no city claim him, for he was an Englishman. Let no Church claim him, for he was a Christian: and this is the crowning glory of this day's celebration."

Thus convinced of the importance of the occasion, Sir Charles and his colleagues resolved to prepare a fitting celebration. An international conference was planned, and delegates invited from all parts of the world. It was at first intended to unite all denominations in the movement; and this intention was so far carried out that a grand inaugural meeting was held at the Guildhall, London, on Monday, June 28th, when addresses were delivered by the late Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Hatherley, the Earl of Aberdeen, Sir Charles Reed, Dr. Morley Punshon, and Dr. Vincent of New York. Similar meetings were held in many parts of the country; but so far as the raising of funds was concerned, it was found impracticable to proceed upon a joint basis.

The amount of work undertaken by Sir Charles in connexion with this Centenary surprised even those who knew him best. Although he was now sitting again in Parliament and pressed by School Board duties, and though he had but lately recovered from an illness which had obliged him to winter abroad, he visited Gloucester, Leeds, Leamington, Rochester, Brighton, and Carisbrooke, besides addressing an enormous open-air meeting in Victoria Park.

A few months only passed, and the Sunday Schools of the land lost in his death one of the heartiest and most influential friends they have known. "From the age of seven years," he wrote in 1869, "I have been in the Sunday School; and with many memories of public work, and yet more responsible duties before me, I can truly say there is no reward in any public service equal to that which falls to the lot of the faithful Sunday School teacher."

CHAPTER IV.

PUBLIC SPIRIT.

"I cannot praise a fugitive and cloister'd vertue, unexercis'd and unbreath'd, that never sallies out and sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race, where that immortall garland is to be run for, notwithstanding dust and heat."

THERE was nothing which, in his later years, Charles Reed used more keenly to regret than the decay of public spirit. Living in the suburbs of a great city, he had ample opportunity of judging on this point. He remarked how people who, in their old homes in the country, had been liberal and large-hearted, supporting literary institutions, subscribing to schools, and never failing at an election to vote blue or buff—save indeed when they voted blue *and* buff—as soon as they migrated to London, or one of the other huge centres of population, would settle down unattached and unrecognised, identified with no

church, forming no neighbourly ties, isolated and utterly unpatriotic, without a care for the improvement of the district — except to get the parish to pave their particular road—or a thought of helping to promote the good government of the land. Observing this narrowing tendency in many around him, he was anxious to guard against it in himself; and though surrounded by a large family and inclined to hobbies that could best be pursued at home, he was determined to acknowledge the duties resting on a loyal citizen, and go to the limit of his strength in efforts to advance the public good.

At first his energies were chiefly given to fighting the battle of religious liberty, in company with men of earnest purpose like his own; but afterwards he found greater pleasure in those forms of philanthropic work in which Churchmen and Nonconformists could unite. This was but the change that comes to most men with ripening age. At the outset of life they are carried eagerly to the fray by their perception of first principles on which they have just laid a firm grasp, by their ardent sense of justice and desire to redress wrongs. But there comes a time when they have seen the drawbacks of controversy, the party spirit

evoked, the false and narrow issues raised; and then, without presuming to check the zeal of others, they are for their part ready to pursue quieter paths, where solid progress may be secured.

On the introduction, in 1843, by Sir James Graham, of his Factories' Education Bill, the Dissenters assailed it with unexpected vehemence. They denounced it as a scheme for destroying the educational machinery they had at great expense provided, and for throwing the care of the young into the hands of the clergy of the Church of England. It was in the East of London that the opposition to this measure originated. A committee was formed, of which Dr. Andrew Reed was chairman, and his son Charles secretary. For many weeks this body, composed chiefly of young men, met every morning at seven o'clock for a couple of hours' work. So scrupulous were they that they would not charge even their plain breakfast to the fund; and in the evening, when each member had despatched his day's business, he would be found busily engaged at one or other of the public meetings, which were being held all over the metropolis. The agitation spread to the provinces, and rapidly attained a force which

surprised its promoters. In the month of May the secession of the five hundred ministers from the Scotch Establishment came like a strong sea breeze to carry in the tide; and by the beginning of June the Bill, after being in vain modified by its author, was abandoned.

The young politicians who had gained this victory were destined before long to witness, and undergo, strange fluctuations of thought in regard to popular education; but for the present they were bent on establishing the East London Religious Liberty Society, on the basis that legislation on matters of religion is not within the province of civil government. Of this society Charles Reed and his friend Mr. J. Carvell Williams acted as honorary secretaries, labouring in its behalf nearly every evening for about a year, when it was merged in the British Anti-State Church Association. Charles Reed was associated about the same time with Mr. Samuel Morley and others in founding the Congregational Board of Education, an institution organized on the purely voluntary principle, with a Training College at Homerton where teachers from all evangelical sections of the Church were prepared.

On the publication of the famous Minutes of Council of 1846, the East London Dissenters

were again first in the field. Their strenuous opposition was, however, on this occasion unsuccessful. The saying of Macaulay that "to deny the education of the people to be the duty of Government was to make Government the great hangman," had sunk into men's minds; and there were many even among the Nonconformists who had come to believe that the State might give secular instruction, and that to that extent its aid could be accepted by religious bodies with a clear conscience. To this number Charles Reed did not belong. He had not yet given up hope that the voluntary system would prove adequate to the needs of the country; nor had he grasped the idea, which in after years he held so firmly, that it was possible for the State, without violating the rights of parent or taxpayer, to give an education based upon moral and religious training.

Although the opposition to the Minutes failed, the East London Committee kept up its organization in view of the approaching general election. The dissolution came in July of that year (1847), and immediately Mr. George Thompson, the eloquent advocate of the anti-slavery cause, was brought forward for the Tower Hamlets and triumphantly returned. Charles Reed, besides

acting as one of his secretaries, published a weekly paper called the *The Nonconformist Elector*, which ran a vigorous course of a couple of months, and flattered itself that it materially helped to secure the election of candidates favourable to voluntary education. For it was on this point that the struggle turned. The motto of the *Elector* was taken from Milton's *Sonnet to Cromwell*—

> "New foes arise,
> Threatening to bind our Souls with secular Chains;"

and in its last number, when recording the incidents of the campaign, it exclaimed:—"We must arouse ourselves to a new and mighty effort in favour of the voluntary and uncompulsory system of extending popular education. We do not like the State to interfere. We must do all we can to prevent the necessity of it." With this uncompromising utterance we may leave the subject of Charles Reed's views on education until we come upon them again when he was in Parliament.

Born and brought up among the Free Churches, he remained through life firmly attached to their principles. Their freedom and simplicity he loved; Puritan blood flowed in his veins, and

he was jealous of any change in doctrine or worship that might endanger the spirituality of religion and interpose any intellectual or priestly barrier between the commonest man and his Maker. He was an active member of the Congregational body, taking frequent part in the deliberations of its leaders, and supporting its missionary and benevolent societies. The records of the Protestant Dissenting Deputies show that for many years, indeed from 1847, he was on the committee of that ancient yet watchful body. In 1868 he was made chairman, and this position he held until his appointment to the chair of the School Board obliged him to relinquish it.

He was sometimes called a religious, not a political, Dissenter, but he did not feel it fair to accept the compliment intended by this distinction. He knew the deep convictions and the freedom from self-seeking that belonged to some who were branded as political Dissenters; and he also knew that any Nonconformist who felt an injury was being done to the cause of religion by the predominance given by the State to one Church, noble as the traditions and achievements of that Church might be, would be unfaithful if for peace' sake he did not seek to influence men in accordance with his views. People might call

him political as much as they pleased, provided they could not show him to be acrimonious or unjust in his way of stating his opinions. His language on ecclesiastical questions was decided. Thus, writing to one of his sons, who had consulted him about a speech to be made at the Cambridge Union on the Irish Church, he said:—

"I send you the best book I know on the question. It is a flagrant abuse, supported by the English Church in violation of her own argument in favour of the majority of the people having a right to the patronage of the State. In Ireland the Roman Catholic population is largely on the increase; even in Londonderry, the stronghold of Protestantism, it is in the ascendant. The Presbyterians are powerful, but the *Regium Donum* paralyses them, for the Irish Church supports the grant to quiet them on the establishment question. I know parishes where there are not ten Protestants,—and part of these Presbyterians,—where the incumbent preaches once a year and draws £800 for his 'cure of souls.' The cruelty is felt keenly by the people, and is at the bottom of their political grievances and chronic grumbling. It is a splendid case for arguing, and I hope you may have a good debate."

A couple of years later, when a number of Nonconformist undergraduates at the same University were preparing an address on the abolition of tests, which address was to be sent to Nonconformist ministers throughout the country, he wrote :—

"I heartily approve of the project. Only a few suggestions occur to me. For instance, if you refer to the Index of Petitions, you will find that for many years the Dissenting Deputies and Congregational Union have steadily petitioned on this subject. Last year I personally sent several petitions to Mr. Coleridge, and no 'apathy' can be said to exist because we have allowed it to be understood that it was desirable for Church people, if they were willing, to do their own work."

Yet, while finding his home among the self-governing Churches of the land, Charles Reed was never disposed to work exclusively with men of his own ecclesiastical stature and complexion. He enjoyed looking over the denominational hedge and shaking hands with the excellent folk on the other side; and public life gave him frequent occasion for stepping across the boundary. Many of his happiest hours were spent in the committee rooms of mixed societies; and it was, without

doubt, his experience of the deep and true evangelic union that may exist between those who take their stand upon the Word of God and look the common foes of humanity full in the face, that led him subsequently to the conviction that unsectarian religious education was not the phantom some persons declared it to be.

For nearly twenty years he sat upon the Committee of the British and Foreign Bible Society, for whose work he entertained an unqualified admiration. "He never came amongst us," said one of his oldest colleagues, "but I felt what an advantage and privilege it was for us to have a man of his great wisdom and mature and earnest piety. Though holding steadfastly to his own opinions, he did it in a way that commended them, not only to those who agreed with him but to those who differed from him." It was a cause of thankfulness to Sir Charles that one of his sons became officially connected with this noble enterprise.

To the Religious Tract Society he gave not merely counsel but laborious service. Even when he was in Parliament and burdened with public cares, he would spend the Monday night in town so as to ensure being at the early breakfast of the Committee on the Tuesday morning. The

business despatched around that table satisfied him that Christian men might carry their co-operation into a region distinct from that traversed at the Bible House. There it was the simple text of Scripture that they joined to circulate; but here agreement was found possible in the issuing of endless publications designed to elucidate and enforce the truths of the Bible.

A year or two before his death, Sir Charles was one of those who supported the bold course of starting weekly papers of general interest for boys and girls. His observation of London schools had saddened him, as he saw how the homes of the poor were cursed by a deluge of sensational and impure periodicals—periodicals that suggested sin and distorted virtue; and he knew that, with few exceptions, private publishers had been unable without serious loss to maintain papers of a higher character. Why should not an influential Society seek to stem the tide by issuing papers that would hold their own against all rivals for attractiveness, and yet be pervaded by a manly and generous spirit? Care must be taken not to obtrude religious teaching in such a way as would inevitably defeat the object in view; but he for one believed that an immense service would be done to the cause of Christianity, if

the false and immoral could be beaten off the field. Even though no single seed were sown, was it not worth while to burn the weeds, pluck out the stones, and prepare the furrows? The attempt was made, though not without misgivings; but the success of the *Boy's Own Paper* was so immediate and remarkable as to induce the Committee to confer a similar boon upon girls. To this subject he referred when presiding at the anniversary of the Tract Society in the spring of 1880:—

"These papers had exactly met the public demand. They were publications of rare merit, and the golden thread of true religious teaching could be seen running through tales and adventures fit to be read in any family. Children in the elementary schools of the country were not simply learning to read—they were being taught to think; and the demand for pure, instructive, and interesting literature was growing apace."

There was another department of public service for which Charles Reed could always find time. Augustine tells in one place how his sainted mother broke off in one of her last ecstasies of

devotion that she might call him dutiful; and one of the blessings that certainly rested on Charles Reed was that of the loyal, the *pious* son. From boyhood he was marked by a deep veneration—for it was more than affection—for both his father and his mother; and this feeling he never lost.

A little incident may be mentioned in illustration of this, drawn from later life. On a certain public occasion at the Mansion House, the hall and staircase were lined with busts and statues of eminent men. Among them was a marble bust of Dr. Andrew Reed, lent from the vestry of Wycliffe chapel. As Charles Reed was passing through the hall, he saw one of the Lord Mayor's footmen coolly hang his hat upon it. Silently, but with indignant gesture, he removed the hat. An old gentleman who happened to be standing by noticed this, and inquired his reason. "That was my father," was the reply. Nothing more was said at the time, and the two parted without becoming known to one another. Afterwards, however, when they were again thrown together, the stranger turned out to be none other than George Peabody. He recalled their first meeting, and said, in justification of his asking assistance in his plans of benevolence, "I am

certain that one who could show himself so affectionate a son must be a true man."

This bears out an observation made by some of Charles Reed's closest friends, that the only way of provoking him to anger was to speak disrespectfully of his father, or of the charities he had, with so much labour, established. In the direction of more than one of these he took an active part. The catholic basis on which they were founded he was always ready to vindicate; and before his death he had the satisfaction of seeing four of his sons on their various boards of management. The youngest, but not the least flourishing of these institutions, the Royal Hospital at Putney, continues to observe Dr. Reed's birthday as Founder's Day. On this occasion Charles Reed made a point of being present; and nowhere did his light, yet earnest and sympathetic, style of address show to greater advantage than when he was speaking to the intelligent and favoured patients gathered in the assembly hall.

This reference to his addresses may fitly introduce one or two remarks upon his qualities as a speaker. His powers in this line were exhibited less in Parliament than outside. He

had not sat in the House of Commons for eighteen months, as will be seen later on, when the Elementary Education Bill became law, and opened to him a career of extra Parliamentary activity, which soon engrossed almost the whole of his time. As a popular speaker, however, he retained to the close of life a considerable gift; the same attentive hearing which he had always secured in the Sunday School, he succeeded in gaining at election meetings, whether in Shoreditch Town Hall, or on the quay among the fishermen of St. Ives.

Mr. Morley says, in explanation of Cobden's oratorical ability:—

"I have asked many scores of those who knew him, Conservatives as well as Liberals, what this secret was; and in no single case did my interlocutor fail to begin, and in nearly every case he ended as he had begun, with the word *persuasiveness*."

The same feature will probably stand out in the recollection of those who have listened to Charles Reed. His speeches had that first of all virtues —they were interesting; the matter was clearly put, and his practice in speaking to the young

had taught him the value of apt illustrations. His delivery was so easy and natural that the manner was entirely hidden behind the subject; and this he treated with such sincerity and good taste that his hearers were disposed to give him their trust. Amid the severe temptations of not a few contested elections, he won many to his side by his good-humour and scrupulous fairness; while those who heard him night after night were astonished at his gentleness and self-control.

Another noticeable feature in his speaking was his great readiness. He seemed instinctively to find common ground with his audience, and seized on the humour of the moment in a way that quickly put him on the best of terms with them. There were, no doubt, occasions when his style was laboured and the effect disappointing; but these were meetings at which he had to contend with a rude organized opposition that no amount of sunshine could melt away. Generally he was very successful in disarming objectors. Once, when there was much stir over an impending election, a working man caused some amusement at a private meeting by admitting that he had found his way in without a ticket, "surreptuous-like," as he put it, and proceeding to speak in a

violent manner; whereupon Sir Charles, instead of attempting to silence him, took his side, and so well expressed what he had been struggling to say about the claims of his class, that the foe was turned into a friend. In succeeding years, as Chairman of the Board, he found scope for all his tact, particularly at the public opening of new schools, where parents and ratepayers, and often the managers of voluntary schools, had to be reasoned with and appeased.

CHAPTER V.

LEISURE HOURS.

"Wings have we—and as far as we can go
We may find pleasure; wilderness and wood,
Blank ocean and mere sky, support that mood
Which with the lofty sanctifies the low.
Dreams, books, are each a world; and books we know
Are a substantial world, both pure and good.
Round these, with tendrils strong as flesh and blood,
Our pastime and our happiness will grow."

LIKE most men who have great powers of application, Charles Reed possessed the enviable faculty of freeing himself at will from the burden of his work. It did not worry him beforehand, and when it was done he could dismiss it from his mind. While love of home and a quick sense of humour made it easy for him to unbend, nothing yielded him such unfailing diversion as his antiquarian tastes. For many years he was a contributor to *Notes and Queries*, and his interleaved set of the volumes abounds with his

comments on quaint subjects of all kinds; but when in 1849 he was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, he confined his researches within limits, and devoted himself specially to the antiquities of London.

Though nothing was common or unclean to him provided it bore the stamp of age, he was not content to accept insufficient evidence; if his inquiries were not satisfactory, he was as ready as Edie Ochiltree to cry, "Prætorian here, Prætorian there, I mind the bigging o't." This cautious spirit enabled him in 1861 to do a public service by the exposure of a collection of "pilgrims' signs," said to have been found by the workmen engaged in excavating Shadwell Dock. Not a few of the learned were deceived by these relics; and the matter excited the greater interest from an action being brought against the *Athenæum* for daring to impugn them. At the trial evidence was given by dealers, shore-rakers, and connoisseurs in favour of these tokens, which were ascribed to the end of the fifteenth or the beginning of the sixteenth century.

As the judge laid down that no case whatever existed against the journal, evidence for the defence was not called; and hence Charles Reed felt that the objects in question might still be

accepted by the unwary as genuine. Being himself convinced that they were manufactured to meet a growing demand, he resolved to hunt down the imposture; and in a paper read before the antiquaries he describes his mode of procedure:

"My attention was directed to the spot from which these objects were said to have been brought; and having satisfied myself that the articles produced in such numbers could not, if found there, have been removed without notice, I set myself to trace out the two men who had been the acknowledged purveyors,—acting daily as between the alleged finders and the dealer. The statement that the two men were shore-rakers was found to be perfectly true, but it was quite clear that no communication took place between them and the navigators in the dock during the day time, nor, so far as I could discover, after work in the evening. In 1859 a man employed in constructing the City Sewers called on me, and, while offering some pieces of pottery for sale, showed me some of these leaden objects. On questioning him I learned that he fully believed that they were forgeries, and he admitted to me that, before the trial, he had endeavoured to

discover the authors of the fraud. I offered to purchase such specimens as he could get, and upon the strength of this he renewed his inquiries, and became acquainted with the shore-raker who gave evidence at the trial.

"From him I learned that this man and his companion were discontented at not receiving after the trial a certain sum of money to which they believed themselves to be entitled. Enlisting himself in their interests, my informant undertook to sell for them, and they readily supplied his demands. On one occasion it was arranged that he should visit them for this purpose, and both the men were then found employed in preparing some moulds, which were immediately broken up to avoid exposure. Having ascertained the fact, my informant pushed his inquiries, and at length became fully informed of their whole proceedings. I have thus obtained not only moulds but tools, respecting the use of which there can be no doubt, because my informant has seen the moulds made and the objects cast and produced from them.

"Rude as these objects are, and incongruous as the various designs may appear, they exhibit a wonderful amount of skill, which is fully evidenced

by the success of the wide-spread deception which has been practised. That an illiterate mud-raker should possess such power of design and manipulation as these objects illustrate, leads one to wish that such remarkable talent had had a worthier sphere for its development.

"The designer of these articles and of thousands more, has had no instruction. He has made his own tools, and, without help, prepared his own moulds. That there have been patterns and sketches given to him is not denied; but the manufacture has been carried on throughout the whole time by these two men, and that after their periods of daily work. The objects are made of lead mixed with pewter, and, having been exposed to the action of a powerful acid, they have been freely daubed with river mud.

"It is to be feared that these men have been doing what multitudes of fabricators of a higher class are daily guilty of; and the greatest service which can be rendered by the Society of Antiquaries will be to expose frauds which bring reproach upon the honourable pursuits of the genuine antiquary."

It has already been mentioned that the ardour of a collector led Charles Reed to accumulate

curiosities of every description. In his study might be seen a Roman urn, a Tudor curfew, a chained missal, Claverhouse's Dagger of Mercy, John Knox's chair, and Cromwell's camp-kettle—the last a treasure obtained from Mrs. Russell, of Cheshunt, the daughter of the last of the male line of the Protector. He had a pious horror of the cleaner; and his family will not readily forget the paroxysm into which he was thrown by a domestic, who had scrubbed up a worm-eaten carving of our first parents under the apple-tree. In this case he preferred the old Adam; its dust was sacred.

His collection of keys was large and well-arranged. In an address for Sunday Schools entitled *The Teacher's Keys*, occurs a passage which reveals the true spirit of the amateur:—

"I have at this moment spread out before me a large collection of keys, all answering to locks which have long since crumbled away under the influence of rust and canker. These keys are of all sorts and conditions—Roman, British, mediæval, modern—most of them rescued from the bed of the Thames; some discovered hidden away behind the tapestries and wainscoting of ancient hostelries; some, long lost, but now restored, from the

draw-wells, cisterns, and chimney corners of old London's dismantled houses. They lie just as they were found—no rude hand of polisher, no reviving file has touched them—some thickly coated with rusty earth, some highly patinated by the river's mud; some of such fine-tempered metal as to defy the fretting tooth of time; some large—the keys of warder or of verger; others minute, hung on the chatelains of high-born dames—or the keys of casket or rare tea-caddy of centuries bygone; some with wards and some without; some with chased bows and fluted stems, and some severely plain and simply useful; some with barrels used as pistols; some with wire-worked points interlaced, and set upon the most delicate pivots; some in the shape of star, cross, or monogram; some emblazoned with coats of arms and crests; some of iron, steel, brass, and even of bone;—there they lie, the types of an endless variety of instruments contrived by the Bramahs and Chubbs of former times. The hands which framed them have lost their cunning, but the handicraft remains to attest the skill with which every key was made to fit—and to open, if rightly used—its own proper lock."

He began to collect autographs as a boy, and

to the end of life was continually adding to his stock. He did not confine himself to any particular line; all was welcome, whether it were a letter of Grisi's lamenting that she had no dress in which to appear in the *Sonnambula*, or one of Jeremy Bentham's introducing "Horatio Nelson a young lad," to the master of the *Seahorse*. At the same time his interest in everything connected with religious liberty, missionary enterprise, and education, gave him a bias in those directions. He procured a nearly complete set of franks of the first Reformed Parliament, and illustrated the history of the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts by letters and portraits of those who had taken a prominent part in that struggle. At public sales he rarely employed middlemen, but acted on his own judgment; and, though often compelled to take a shovelful of sand in order to secure a few grains of gold, he was what is called a lucky buyer. In later life he received many presents, and after his death his desk at the School Board was found full of letters from eminent men, put aside to be incorporated in his collection.

Nothing pleased him better than to settle down for an evening at home, with a pile of autographs before him, quietly indexing his treasures while he listened to reading aloud; on such occasions

the appearance of supper was the invariable signal for a groan of suffering. He began to make a revised catalogue the winter before his death, but it was broken off while he was somewhere among the "secondary divines." Most of his literary and political autographs were continually doing service at soirees of mechanics' institutes or young men's societies. For some years the choicest were on view at the Crystal Palace; fortunately they were removed, in order to be replaced by a fresh set, a few days before the part of the building where they had hung was burnt down.

Although Charles Reed's life was too busy to permit of much in the way of diary or letters, his pen moved easily and well. When his firm took up the *British Banner*, on the retirement of Dr. Campbell, he fulfilled for some weeks the duties of editor, and on other occasions he showed equal readiness in despatching literary work. Once he was concerned in the publication of a magazine, for which a talented lady had undertaken to write a serial story. When several chapters had appeared, to the dismay of the proprietors she declined to proceed. They felt it impossible to meet her demands, and yet were plainly at her mercy. To their inexpressible

relief, Charles Reed said he would complete the tale; and this he did with such spirit and skill that only those behind the scenes had any idea that a new hand was engaged in developing the plot.

It was his habit, when he had received hospitality, to send his acknowledgments in a set of humorous verses, for which he claimed no merit save that they might give pleasure for the moment. Thus, after attending his brother Andrew's wedding at Edinburgh, he wrote to his host, the Rev. G. D. Cullen:—

"Swift speed the wheels, fast flies the train;
Resigned unto our fate,
A last and lingering look we give
Towards Royal Terrace, where do live
Our friends, at Twenty-eight.

"How sad the parting there this morn
My pencil won't relate;
How deep the woe, how keen the grief,
And how in tears we found relief
On leaving Twenty-eight.

"Our nephew on his circuit went,
But begged of us to state,
That through his northern legal round
He bears about a sense profound
Of all the worth that late he found
At number Twenty-eight.

"And hurrying to our 'circuit home,'
In railway *tête-à tête*,
We fail for words wherewith to tell
One half the praise of those who dwell
At number Twenty-eight. . . .

"So now, dear friends, we'll strive to learn
Humbly to imitate
The virtues rare which we have seen
Illustrated, while we have been
Your guests at Twenty-eight."

Or the following, which is headed "Pencillings by the Way," December 10, 1859, and is addressed to "Arthur Morley of Sneinton, Esquire":—

"My very dear friend,
I really must say
A few words of kindness
On going away:
The words which you would not
Allow me to utter
When parting to-day—
Your usual way!

"Though you shrink from receiving
The thanks which are due,
These are none the less hearty,
Thus offered to you;
Though miles are between us,
I still must retain
The last words, at parting,
Of meeting again—
Yes, 'meeting again'!

"That old home of yours
Is a dear place to me;
I love its quaint gables,
I love its roof-tree;

Each room has its record
Of pleasure or pain;
A record of partings
And meetings again—
Yes, pleasure and pain!

"I see there the traces
Preserved with such care,
The undisturbed places
Of loved ones, once there;
The filial devotion
I honour and share,
That guards the old dwelling
And leaves things as they were—
Ah yes, 'as they were'!

"Some red-letter days,
Springing up to my view,
Remind me of friends
Dear, faithful and true,
Whose example, now followed,
(And long let it be)
Gives welcome to others
And kindness to me—
Yes, kindness to me."

While he could but seldom find leisure for chatty correspondence, he made time to write to old friends, and especially to those whose path was lonely and whom his words might cheer. "I like," he says to one, "to answer such letters as yours at once, lest they should get no reply at all; and that would be a sad thing, seeing how rare old friends are, and how much I like to make of them." The following letter he sent to Mrs.

Rawson of Clifton, on hearing of her rapidly increasing illness:—

"ORE PLACE, HASTINGS, *Dec.* 6, 1876.

"The sight of your handwriting again has gladdened my heart. You must be better to write as you do; but I plainly see that earthly ties are unbracing, and that you are already pluming the pinion for a higher flight. I give you joy, my dear friend, that you wait with eagerness to hear the Master's call; this truly is heaven on earth, and you are one of those who walk with God on earth. We have had some sweet communion together, and in the regions of light I hope to find my place among those who gather round the river and renew the intercourse of kindred spirits. I may never have the opportunity of telling you (for it seems improbable that you will be allowed to see any but the members of your family again), but I should like you to know what good your character as an example, and your friendship as an incentive, have done to me. From the first year of my solitary life in Leeds, when you took an interest in my concerns, as no other then did, I can trace it; and ever since I have been conscious of your sympathy and prayers.

"My present public work satisfies me far more than legislative duty did. I am not a keen party man, and I hate its spirit. The recent election will cause the curse of party strife to cease from our Education work, and of this I am devoutly glad.

"You refer to Christmas; may it be a hallowed time to you! Our circle is enlarging; but when we meet we embrace within it many absent ones, and this year you will not be forgotten. How glad I am that some of my children know you!

"May the New Year open with a token for good for you, dear friend, and in anticipation I wish you a happy time.

"With kindest regards to Mr. R.,

"I am, dearest friend,

"Yours very truly,

"CHARLES REED."

His children, when at school and college, never failed to receive from him words of sympathy and guidance. "A word," he writes to one, "before your examination. Your best is all we want; and let the issue be what it may, we are satisfied." To the same a week or two later:—"I can only tell you how full of gladness we are, and how grateful to the Giver of all good for the help you have

received. In life, as in death, our real strength is found in the sense of dependence on Him who shapes all our ends. God bless you in the enjoyment of this new trust, and help you in the use of this new influence! We shall hear with pleasure any of the small talk connected with the decision, the places of the men, &c."

When one of his sons was leaving college and going through the ordeal of preaching "on probation," he received from his father the following note, written from the House of Commons :—

"I do not like your entering on the engagements of Sunday without a word of sympathy. You have much of my thought and many prayers, but our personal intercourse is necessarily much restricted. Still it has been a great source of pleasure to us that so much of your life has been passed at home; and now that you are looking to a sphere of future work, we value the more what we are likely soon to lose. I trust your education has been of so sound and generous a nature as to give you advantages wherever you may settle. Do not hurry into a settlement against any impression that it is not in all respects the call of duty and of God; but if it should seem to be the place suited to you and you to it, be

sure that it will meet the cordial approval of those most concerned in your welfare."

Such literary work as Charles Reed could accomplish had to be done in time snatched from business. In 1861 he assisted the late Mr. H. T. Riley in preparing for the press a translation of the *Liber Albus*, that mine of civic lore of the fifteenth century. In 1863 he was associated with his brother Andrew in writing the life of their father, Dr. Reed; and in the following year, when Deputy Governor of the Irish Society, he compiled a narrative of its connexion with the province of Ulster. His published addresses and reports on education and kindred topics are too numerous to mention.

Year after year such holiday as he could take was spent with his family at Broadstairs, where they occupied a house, which was founded indeed on the sand, but built against the rock, and charmingly near to the sea. A good swimmer himself, he was not content till his children, girls as well as boys, could swim also; and to this end he bought an open boat with a sail, which was in constant use throughout the summer days. With the concurrence of her who was always his adviser, he allowed the young people a long tether,

willing to endure anxiety rather than deny them that freedom which he deemed essential to the development of self-reliance. It was one of his favourite doctrines that the young should see something of the world; hence, as his children lived generally at home, they were encouraged in their holidays to get as much change as possible. After a while Alpine climbing and canoe-cruises on the Rhine and Danube took the place of the English sea-side; nor did even the sad accident which befell his youngest son lead him to feel that this policy had been mistaken.

At Broadstairs he was a great favourite with the sailors, and always welcome on board their luggers. An incident occurred in 1860 which for a time raised him in their eyes to the position of a hero. A large ship had gone ashore on a projecting tongue of sunken rock off Kingsgate. The Broadstairs men went off to her assistance; and out of their claim arose a lawsuit, the costs of which fell upon some ten of their number. When Charles Reed arrived at the place, he heard the doleful story of the arrest of these men, and their separation from their families, just at the time when the season for earning a livelihood was beginning. He generously took up their cause and addressed a letter to the *Times*, which within

a few days brought in more than the sum required. The debt was paid, and one Saturday he had the pleasure of going to Maidstone Gaol and bringing back the men in triumph to their homes. The balance of the fund was applied to the giving annually of prizes for bravery in saving life; and he paid occasional visits to Broadstairs for the next twenty years for the purpose of awarding these prizes.

He did not see Switzerland till he was fifty; but when he had once been there he was always wishing to go again, so keen was his appreciation of its beauties. The following is a letter from the Riffel, addressed to his youngest son, a boy of eleven :—

"DEAREST KENNETH,

"It seems high time you should have a letter, upon the principle of fairness, the girls having received letters recently from mamma. It is intensely cold here, and we can scarcely put on wraps enough: the hail is falling, and we can see nothing but clouds and snow. Yesterday was a perfect contrast. The fields of ice and snow were resplendent under the sun, and as we looked along the shining way leading up to the very heavens, the heights above us looked like the

battlements of the celestial city, whence the shining ones look upon the earth beneath. Some day you, dear boy, will mount these snowy passes; may the same intense delight and the same thoughts of the land of light and glory fill your breast! I wish that all my children may see these glorious scenes, which animate the spirit and purify the heart more than most earthly visions of delight." . . .

During his residence in St. Thomas's Square, Hackney, the number of his children increased to eight; and—much to the benefit of his own family—he provided a home at different times for his nephews, Thomas Blackburn Baines and Edward Manwaring Baines, while the one was practising at the bar, and the other was studying at University College. In 1864 he removed to a house in Upper Homerton, which he called Earlsmead, after a small estate in Surrey which had belonged to his father; and seven years later he gave the same name to a larger house, with about three acres of garden and orchard, which he purchased at Page Green, Tottenham.

It would be unbecoming to speak of the home life save as its tone was due to his presence and influence. One who had frequent opportunity for

observing says, "Those who were even occasionally admitted to Sir Charles' home could not fail to be struck by the perfect understanding that existed amongst all its members, and which evidently sprang out of the perfect understanding and mutual trust of its heads. When all had joined to greet the father on his return after a season of separation, it was not long before he would dismiss them with a playful 'Now I want to talk to mother,' and draw her aside for a stroll in the garden after the old lover-fashion. To the end of life his manner towards his wife lost none of its watchful consideration and chivalry; and he often warned his sons never to let the familiarity of daily intercourse make them forget what was due to their sisters."

The Christmas of 1874 was the last of which he could say "All are with us;" before the season had returned, the breaking-up of the home circle had begun. That December he paid a flying visit to his brother Andrew, who was wintering at Lausanne. On his way back he jotted down a few verses, sketching with great felicity the characteristics of each member of the family. One or two of these, as they refer to children no longer living, may be

given in illustration of the tenderness of his home affections. He called them "Memories, written on my *Bradshaw* on the last night of the year":—

"The sister, born
For us to mourn:
Her heaven-lit eye,
Her parting sigh:
That wintry day,
That one brief ray,
The agony
Of leaving thee,
Our Edith.

"Steadfast, serene,
A little queen,
Trustful and meek,
Nor prone to speak;
Avoiding praise,
Yielding always;
Patient to bear
Pain—and to share—
Our Constance.

"How glad the morn
When he was born,
Our youngest one,
Our little son.
Yes, room for thee
'Neath the roof-tree,
Our crowning joy,
Our darling boy,
Our Kenneth."

CHAPTER VI.

CITIZEN OF LONDON.

"A life in civic action warm,
A soul on highest mission sent."

A JOURNEY grows tedious to the man who keeps his eyes fixed upon the ground; and, in like manner, life in a great city is apt to be a prosaic experience to those who have no ambition beyond that of mingling with the crowd, buying, selling, and getting gain. For Charles Reed, however, London life was redeemed from monotony by the wide horizon over which his eye travelled. His antiquarian studies enabled him to connect his daily haunts with memorable incidents in the annals of the city, while his high sense of patriotism made him earnestly anticipate what London might become, when her citizens were all educated and all upright. One of his earliest lectures was on the London of a hundred years

ago; and above that point he loved to mount the stream of history, surrounding himself with relics of the city as Pepys and Stow had described it, and reconstructing it as it appeared in the pages of the *Liber Albus*. The same feeling led him to resent the disparaging remarks sometimes made about the Corporation, by persons who knew nothing of its ancient services in the cause of liberty, and of such civic leaders as William Walworth and Richard Whittington. Hence, when he joined the Common Council in 1855 as a representative of the ward of Farringdon Within, he resolved to do all he could to uphold the honour and the best traditions of the City of London.

His first opportunity was afforded by the Public Libraries' Act of that year. Under its provisions a town council was empowered to summon a meeting of burgesses, who might resolve by a majority of two-thirds to levy a rate for the establishment of a library. This course it was proposed to adopt in London; a meeting was called at the Mansion House under the presidency of Sir Francis Moon, and the promoters were sanguine of success. But strong opposition was manifested, and after a stormy discussion the previous question was carried.

Undeterred by this defeat, Charles Reed wrote a pamphlet, entitled, *Why not? A Plea for a Free Public Library and Museum in the City of London, established without Taxation.* It had been urged against the scheme that libraries and literary institutions abounded already, and some had failed; that the loss of books, and damage done to them, would be enormous; that there were not residents enough in the City to want a library; and so forth. To all these objections the author supplied answers founded on evidence which any one might verify for himself. If, for example, it were true that some institutions of the kind were languishing, was not this because they had been established for the benefit of a particular class, and were not free to the people? While to argue that working men were indisposed to read was to disregard the testimony of the second-hand booksellers, who declared that mechanics were "capital customers, and not so screwy as the gentlemen." He continued, "It is not to be supposed that the chief requirement is the power of reading *in* a library; what is wanted is to get the means of reading *out* of a library. We want to help a man to carry his knowledge to his fireside. For those who have no domestic hearths, the free library will be a

resort for their hours of leisure, while for those who have, home is the place to which the volumes will be taken."

In answer to the question how the thing was to be accomplished, he referred to the doles of money made every winter in the City, and suggested that there was a far better way of befriending the poor:—

"There are thousands who crave something better than bodily food, and to whom the gift of mental aliment would be a priceless boon. In America men give what they term 'start help' to great undertakings. If your Lordship were disposed to take the initiative, the citizens would follow your example. At the instigation of the Mayor of Manchester, twenty-six merchants subscribed as many hundreds of pounds, and established their free library without taxation. And I believe the twenty thousand subscribers among the working classes of the North would find an honest-hearted rivalry in the operatives of all classes in this our metropolis."

Then follows a word as to the museum:—

"The British Museum is so full that the difficulty is to get the trustees, not to purchase, but

literally to accept, contributions. The collection, fine and extensive as it is, is far away from the centre of the City, and practically useful only to the population west of Temple Bar. The proposed museum, embracing objects of interest in art and nature, ancient and modern, would be a place of great resort, and would become the depository of those remarkable specimens of Roman and British work which enrich every part of the City, and are turned up every day by the spade of the excavator. . . . I have no wish to see the education of the people taken into the hands of Government; but I do desire to see the 'mighty folks of labour' lift themselves up to exercise, with a manly spirit of self-reliance, the powers of mind with which they are endowed."

This plea was not successful at the time. Six years passed before another public meeting was called to consider the propriety of adopting the Public Libraries' Act; and it was not till 1869 that a committee was appointed by the Corporation to erect a library and museum worthy of its resources and responsibilities. Then the long-desired work was taken up in earnest. The new Guildhall Library was opened in 1873; and the extent to which its advantages have been

appreciated is the best reply to all the old objections. In 1875 there were 192,000 readers, while in 1882 the number had risen to 343,000, giving a daily average of 1,210 readers. Charles Reed sat on the Library Committee for twenty-four years, rendering good service by his extensive knowledge of books.

His connexion with the Committee of the City of London School extended over a period nearly as long, and shows in another form his desire to lay hold of the educational side of civic life. In maintaining this public school at a high level, he felt that the Corporation was discharging one of its chief duties, and he was always an advocate of liberality in its management. For the late head-master, Dr. Mortimer, he entertained the highest regard, and he felt it an advantage to be able to place his sons, one after another, under his care. The school attracted him the more because it realised, better than any similar institution he knew, his conception of religious equality. The sons of Churchmen and Dissenters were treated with absolute impartiality; the religious teaching was earnest and thorough, yet so interesting did the doctor make it, and so free from all narrowness, that Jewish and Roman Catholic boys scarcely ever claimed

liberty to be absent. With Dr. Abbott, the present head-master, and his able assistants, he stood on equally cordial terms; while he followed the course of old boys at the Universities with pride, and was particularly glad to see any of them appointed masters in the school in which they had been trained. His last service was that of "urging the Corporation to grant the new site on the Thames Embankment. In him," writes Dr. Abbott, "the school lost one of its best friends."

It was his interest in sons of Nonconformists who had gone up from the City School to Oxford and Cambridge, that led him in 1866 to move a resolution in the Common Council in favour of the abolition of University Tests—a resolution which was carried unanimously. Some years later he took an active part in putting the Gresham Lectures on a more popular and useful footing. The Latin lectures delivered under this Trust had ceased to be of the least service, unless to the lecturer himself, who might hope to be spared his dreary task for lack of audience, and to the malicious schoolboys who arranged to attend at the given hour in just sufficient number to defeat his innocent design. It was high time this farce should end, and that whatever instruction

there was to be given should be imparted in the mother tongue.

Believing the recognition of public service to be a legitimate and important part of civic duty, Charles Reed on four occasions moved the conferring of the Freedom of the City upon men of high character and achievements. In the case of Lord Clyde and Sir James Outram, he prefaced his motion by a biographical sketch, in which he singled out for praise not their most showy deeds, but those that revealed the noblest qualities. Thus he reminded the Court of the rare self-sacrifice of Outram, when he had been nominated to the command in India, in giving up that command to Havelock until Lucknow should be reached, and volunteering meanwhile to serve under his friend.

From his speech of 1860 in honour of Sir Leopold McClintock, an extract may be permitted. After tracing the history of earlier polar expeditions and reminding the City of its grant in aid of the search after Ross, he dwelt on the heroism of Lady Franklin :—

"Hope died out in the hearts of all save one, for in hers it could not expire. That which was declined by the nation, this feeble but self-reliant woman undertook. She resolved to

sacrifice all for one last effort. She had impoverished her means by three expeditions; for the fourth she sold all she had. She purchased a ship, she drew with her own hand her chart and instructions, and she committed the enterprise to Captain McClintock."

And this was how he filled his "post of honour," in his little vessel of 170 tons:—

"The *Fox* left in July, 1857. In Melville Bay she was hopelessly beset and frozen in the pack. Between November and February, in the midst of floes and threatening icebergs, they drift down Baffin's Bay, 1,194 geographical miles in 416 days, never setting foot on land from August to April. In the midst of all this their thoughts, brave hearts, were not for themselves, but for 'poor Lady Franklin, and how disappointed she would be.' The winter over, and once more afloat, they push northward till, baffled again, McClintock retraces his way and, following Lady Franklin's directions, makes for Bellot's Straits, where they held their position till they were ice-bound for a second winter. Without sun to cheer, deserted by the very animals of the Arctic seas—the birds and the bears travelling

together southward—shut up in a box, covered in with drifted snow, these twenty-five human beings endured the dreadful monotony of daily life with nothing but the sighing and groaning of the churning ice, which rolls ever from the pole to the equator. Emerging from this second winter, and the perils of the breaking up of the pack, McClintock says, 'After yesterday's experience, I can understand how a man's hair has turned gray in one night. Had self-reliance been my only support and hope, it is not impossible that mine might have illustrated the fact.' On the 9th of November, 1858, while we were discharging the ancient rites of hospitality in this City, that little company were committing to an icy grave the body of a comrade, where no kindred could follow, and no hand of friend could plant the memorial flower.

The sun of 1859 brought light and hope. Captain McClintock put his sleigh in motion, and traversed the ice to the Magnetic Pole. He found the first token of the lost expedition in a naval button upon the dress of an Esquimaux, and following up this clue, three parties were formed to cover the unexplored region before them. With true naval generosity McClintock, resigning to Lieutenant Hobson the

most hopeful track, reserved to himself the most intricate and difficult one, while Allen Young took charge of the third. The result is known to us all. What a melancholy record is that which has been brought to light! How little is known after all, and yet what a tale those few lines reveal! They show that, after two winters of hope deferred, the noble-hearted Franklin died—by no hand of man—from no want of food, but amongst his followers, and by them was buried. Yes; the dead buried the dead! He had touched lat. 77 N. He had, in fact, discovered the North-West passage. The record tells of the abandonment of the ships in 1848, and of the reduction of the crew by death to a hundred and five men.

Divesting themselves of all they held dear, short of life, they started on April 27th, 1848, dragging the boat of the *Erebus*, intended for the Fish River, for sixty-five miles, and then deserting it with two comrades, whose strength was exhausted, but whose courage could not die. On and beyond, we have the traces in relics undisturbed; at seventy miles one 'dropped as he walked,' and he was lying as he fell. Along the shore of King William's Land the track is followed; as far as Montreal Island—150 miles—were thirty corpses;

one, an officer, had been found by Anderson. God only knows where the rest may be! Noble fellows! they had traversed the frozen sea; they had reached America to starve in a sterile land. They had searched for the North-West passage, and they found it. They came, they saw, they conquered, and they died. Had McClintock brought Franklin home, what honours would have awaited him—had he rescued but one to tell the tale, what renown would have been his! Is he to be the less honoured, now that he has not achieved an impossibility? He has refused compensation, he has declined to accept the *Fox* as a gift. No doubt he will receive his portion of the reward offered 'to any person or persons who, by virtue of their efforts, should ascertain the fate of Sir John Franklin.' Be this as it may, I ask this Court to confer upon him an honour which no money can purchase or represent, and enrol his name with men whose names this country will not willingly let die.

"My Lord Mayor—The men who formed this expedition deserve individual and special recognition. The labours of Lieutenant Hobson were second only to those of his chief. Of Captain Allen Young, I will only say that he gave up a lucrative command in the merchant marine, and

became the sailing master of the *Fox*, not only giving his services, but throwing into the general funds £500 as his free contribution.

"They went forth on a noble errand, they risked their all—some perished nobly in the discharge of duty, and all were prepared for the sacrifice. It was for a woman—that was sufficient cause; it was for their country—that was sufficient glory."

Charles Reed owed his introduction to George Peabody to circumstances mentioned in a previous chapter; but it appears, from an article which he wrote in his family magazine, that he had heard of his name a good many years before:—

"I was one of the sub-commissioners of the Exhibition of 1851, when the American department came under my notice, and I was told of the man who had saved his country from disgrace by securing at the last moment, through his own effort and at his own cost, an adequate representation of its manufacturing industry. I honoured him, though all I knew was that he was a Mr. Peabody; and a curious name I thought it.

"Time passed on. In 1862 London was startled by the news that an American merchant had given

150,000*l.* for the benefit of the poor of London. I at once made up my mind to ask the Corporation to recognise this noble act by the vote of the Freedom of the City—a vote seldom given to any but soldiers and statesmen. After a time I entered notice of motion; whereupon two aldermen called upon me to urge its withdrawal; they knew Mr. Peabody's position, they said, and felt sure the report was incorrect; while if it were true, it was probably a proposal, not to pay down the money but to deposit securities, which of course might mean nothing. After making inquiries, I was assured of the *bona fides* of the gift, and, though knowing nothing of the career of the donor, moved and carried my resolution."

It should always be remembered that the amount of this gift was less remarkable than the spirit that prompted it. The American merchant, unlike many who hasten home with all they have earned abroad, desired to acknowledge his obligations to the City in which he had made his money, and where hospitality had been shown him; and he resolved to appropriate to its service a part of his fortune. This he did at a time when there was much friction between

England and America, and with the expressed hope that his act might help to promote a more friendly feeling. His own humble origin he made no attempt to conceal; on the contrary, he let it be known that he had begun life as junior clerk in a grocery store, and avowed "for the encouragement of the youth of this great city and country, that there were few persons among them whose opportunities were not better than his own had been at their age." Best of all, he insisted, in the management of his fund, on a rigid exclusion of sectarian influences, declaring that his wishes would be violated if any deserving person were deprived of benefit by reason of religious or political bias.

All these were points on which the mover of the resolution dwelt: the sequel he thus describes:—

"My speech was fully reported, and was seen by the subject of the eulogy. The next day a gentleman sought me out in Ivy Lane, who said he had been sent by Mr. Peabody to discover who Mr. Charles Reed was, and was surprised to find me a different person from Charles Reade the novelist. He expressed the pleasure Mr. Peabody felt that such an honour should

spontaneously have been done him, and his astonishment that a stranger should have learnt so much of his early life. Two days afterwards a portly, silver-haired gentleman entered my room, announcing himself as Mr. Peabody. He took a chair, talked of many subjects, but not of himself, and asked me to call on him. When I paid the call, I found him in lodgings, where he lived very simply and kept no carriage. He discussed with me his intention of making further donations to the London poor, and sought my advice on several points. After this we frequently met. I wrote for him many public letters and some speeches; and as I recognised his simplicity and real goodness, I became assured that his was a pure and rare benevolence."

In 1865, after adding to his gift, Mr. Peabody paid a visit to the United States, carrying with him a miniature portrait of the Queen, which she had sent him, together with an autograph letter of thanks for his act of "more than princely munificence." On his return in the following year, he saw more of Charles Reed than before, and was strongly attracted by the family life to which he was introduced in his friend's home. One morning, while he was staying there, the youngest

boy brought a large Bible to his father for family worship. Mr. Peabody said, "Ah! my boy, you now carry the Bible, but the time is coming when the Bible must carry you."

He requested Mr. Reed in 1869 to act as one of his British executors, under the will he was then making, and announced his intention of suggesting to the trustees of his fund the addition of his name as that of one "well-known to him for his high and most honourable character."[1] Two months later he died; and his body, after temporary interment in Westminster Abbey, was conveyed to America on board a man-of-war, with every token of English gratitude and respect. One could only wish that these sentiments were better expressed in the statue erected to his honour at the Royal Exchange, where it goes unfortunately to swell the dusky gallery of benefactors whom a London atmosphere delights to dishonour.

The part taken by Charles Reed in the preservation of Bunhill Fields Burial Ground was due

[1] The Peabody gift was increased by this will to a total of half-a-million sterling; and, at the end of 1882, after the providing of a large number of dwellings for the poor, the result of the administration of the fund was that, so far from the capital being wasted, it had been increased to 800,000*l*.

alike to antiquarian and religious motives. It appearing in 1865 that this "Campo Santo of the Dissenters," as Southey called it, was likely to pass into the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, an application was made to them for a pledge that it should be held sacred for ever; but, as no disposition was shown on their part to concur in any arrangement for the preservation of the spot, Charles Reed moved a resolution in the Common Council expressive of regret. In so doing, he traced back the history of Bone-hill in the Fields to the days when it belonged to the Prebend de Halliwell et Fensbury, and was taken by the City at a yearly rental of twenty shillings. At the time of the Great Plague it became, according to Defoe, the receptacle for thousands of bodies that could not be received into the city churchyards; and shortly afterwards "many of the ministers ejected in 1662, who were refused burial in the churchyards, were laid at rest here by their pious followers."

"Now the question was this—was this ground to pass away from those who had buried sacred treasures there upon the faith of the public pledges of the Prebend of the City, and had done so even up to the year 1842?

It could not be said that it was a Non-conformist question, for, though John Bunyan, John Owen, Isaac Watts, Dr. Lardner, and the Wesley family were buried there, they belonged not to any sect but to the world—the same world that claimed a property in the remains of Defoe, Fleetwood, Blake and Ritson. It was a question happily removed far from the heat and dust of party strife; it was a piece of ground hallowed by the most sacred of all memories, consecrated by the truest of all consecrations; and the reply of that Court to the memorialists must be as clear as the English language could make it."

The Court unanimously agreed to accept the care of the ground on behalf of the public, and appointed a committee, with the mover of the resolution as chairman, to pursue the inquiry. Negotiations with the Ecclesiastical Commission being still in vain, the Dissenting Deputies joined the Corporation in obtaining a short Act of Parliament to secure the ground to its original use. Charles Reed was again made chairman of the committee charged with the execution of this Act; and at the conclusion of its labours, in October 1869, when the ground was formally

reopened, this was the account he was able to render:—

"In the midst of the fen beyond the city wall, a tumulus or mound marked traditionally the site of Saxon burial. Be this as it may, this spot has been so used from time immemorial, and in 1549 more than a thousand cartloads of human remains were removed from the charnel-house of St. Paul's Cathedral and deposited here. From that period there were burials around the bone-hill, which soon acquired the name of Bunhill in the Fields, where the archers and bowmen of the City converted the profitless waste around into a place for pastime and military training. In the days of the first Stuart, and during the Commonwealth, burial in this ground was much sought after by families that could claim no right of interment in the City churches; and this fact led the Corporation of London, in 1665, to inclose this hitherto unprotected spot for the use mainly of the Nonconformists. From 1665 to 1832, when the ground was closed, 123,000 bodies are registered as buried here, and though only 5,000 vaults are now discoverable, it is found that vaults are lying buried at depths varying from six to twelve feet beneath the surface. . . . . In the presence

of representatives of families whose dead were buried here, and of the delegates of churches and societies, whose pastors and founders rest in this ground, I desire to say that, in all the reparations and alterations carried on within this inclosure, not a fragment of stone has been taken away, nor has any portion of soil been removed. Tombs have been raised from beneath the ground, stones have been set straight, illegible inscriptions have been deciphered and recut, hundreds of decayed tombs have been restored, paths have been laid, and avenues planted; and in all, the sacred rights of sepulture have been scrupulously respected."

His own share in this work of reverence was by no means light. "For two years," he wrote to a friend, "I have personally superintended the restoration, week by week;" and, appended to his copy of the pamphlet he drew up, entitled *Old Bunhill Fields Restored*, is a manuscript note which describes the pains he took with regard to a single grave—that of Fleetwood, Cromwell's son-in-law:—

"During the repairs of the ground I discovered this grave, by the use of a borer, and came upon a ledger stone six feet below the surface. My

secretary and I found the entrance to the vault, and had it opened. Recollecting what Mr. Charles Knight had told me, on the authority of some 'private diary' in his possession, I searched for the body of Oliver Cromwell, and in a canvas cloth I saw the bones of a man, but no skull. This was lower than the remains of Fleetwood's own coffin, of which a portion of the purple velvet, with gilt-headed nails remained, and I am of opinion that the 'common talk of the people that Cromwell's trunk was bought of the official persons at Tiburne and buried in Fleetwood's tomb in Bunhole Field,' is not without foundation.

"Another circumstance needs recording. We found the side of the tomb where the entablature had been, broken up and defaced, so that no inscription could be seen; and I have no doubt that, when the enlightened Charles ordered the bones of Elizabeth, the mother of the Protector, to be 'dug up' at Westminster, and thrown into a pit in the churchyard of St. Margaret's,' an attack was made upon other tombs of persons eminent in Church and State.

"It is known that on the 12th and 13th September, 1661, this brutal work commenced in London, and in addition to Elizabeth Cromwell,

and Elizabeth Claypole her daughter, the bodies of Robert Blake the Admiral, John Pym the commoner, Thomas May the historian, Dr. Twisse the prolocutor, Edward Popham, Colonel Meldrum, Colonel Boscawen, with Stephen Marshall and William Strong (divines), suffered this indignity.

"Yet I have seen my friends George Peabody, a Congregational dissenter, and David Livingstone, a Nonconformist missionary, buried by the side of kings in Westminster Abbey. (C. R., June 20, 1877.)"

His connexion with Ireland, which became very close and tender, originated in the visits he paid on behalf of the Corporation to the Ulster estates of the Irish Society. When he first went across, an embittered state of feeling existed on the part of the citizens of Derry, chiefly on the subject of leases; and, to make matters worse, certain appeals for grants in aid of local improvements had been refused. It was on the occasion of a banquet in the Derry Court House that the attack upon the Society was opened by one of its principal critics; and Mr. Deputy Reed, who was unknown to most of those present, had the unenviable task assigned to him of replying. However, so effectively did he speak, and in so conciliatory a spirit, that the

opposition was silenced, and the heart of the Maiden City fairly won. Next summer (1864) her new friend returned, much to her satisfaction, as Deputy-governor of the Society. An accident that befell some workmen engaged in Derry gave to him and his colleagues the opportunity of rendering help, and thereby cementing the bond of good will. The Derry Corporation voted him thanks; and his public addresses at Coleraine and elsewhere strengthened the favourable impression. The autumn of that year was spent by him in compiling a brief history of the Irish Society, which was shortly afterwards published by order of the Court.

These services were commemorated by a banquet in London at which a testimonial was presented, together with an address in which his colleagues testified to the good he had been able to accomplish. "His attention to the business of the Society has been unremitting, whilst his kindness and courtesy have rendered the intercourse of the members of the Court a pleasure; and during the last visitation to Ireland, to his tact and good temper, accompanied by the firmness he displayed at each meeting, is attributed the improved state of feeling now happily existing in that country towards the Society."

CHAPTER VII.

PARLIAMENT.

"Let no desire of ease,
No lack of courage, faith or love, delay
Mine own steps on that high, thought-paven way
In which my soul her clear commission sees;
Yet with an equal joy let me behold
Thy chariot o'er that way by others rolled!"

When, in the session of 1867, the Tower Hamlets were divided, and their northern part formed into a distinct constituency returning two members, Charles Reed was at once designated by his friends as a candidate for the new borough of Hackney. A requisition signed by twelve hundred of his neighbours decided him to stand, and in July he issued his address. "I have sprung from the people; my life has been spent among them; my sympathies are with them, and my highest ambition is to serve them." Sixteen months of hard work ensued, during which

the whole borough, with its twenty or thirty square miles of houses and its forty thousand voters, was thoroughly canvassed. The result was seen at the General Election of 1868, the last under the old system of voting, when he was returned, together with Mr. John Holms, who still occupies his seat to the credit and great advantage of his constituents. The figures were remarkable. Although the Liberal strength was divided among five candidates, yet the solitary Conservative polled only 2,633 votes, while Mr. Holms received 12,343, and Mr. Reed 14,785.

The cause for congratulation, however, lay not so much in the size of the majority as in the means by which it had been secured. This may be seen from the following letter, which was published at the time :—

"As one of seven gentlemen who have had the general direction of the contest on behalf of Mr. Charles Reed, let me say that, from first to last, it has been conducted by the entirely voluntary efforts of his supporters; no paid canvassers have been engaged, but in their place we have had a volunteer army of some three hundred electors of all classes, who have for three months past been actively engaged in

canvassing the whole borough, and to such good purpose that hardly a single house has been unvisited. . . . . We are proud of having returned so good a Liberal as Mr. Reed, but even more proud of having done so without the intervention of electioneering agents, and in the face of a very large expenditure on the part of some of the other candidates."

The victory was largely due to the enthusiasm with which Charles Reed's cause was taken up by the Sunday School teachers. His brother, the Rev. Andrew Reed, tells that a year or two after this he was taking tea with him in the House of Commons, when some member, who was opposed to his views on the Sabbath and on religious education, jocosely exclaimed, "We shall beat you, Reed; we have the support of the trades' unions and the working men." "I don't believe it," replied the other; "you may have all you say, but I have a force on my side that is more than a match for them." "Pray what is that?" "I have with me the myriads of Sunday School teachers throughout the land."

A proposal was made to repay to Charles Reed his expenses, amounting to about 1,400*l.*; but on hearing of it, he wrote to Mr. Samuel Morley,

who had agreed to act as treasurer, as follows:—

"Admitting as I do that constituencies and not candidates should charge themselves with the ordinary expenses of elections, and appreciating most highly the generous motives of my friends, I cannot be unmindful that the stress of this effort would fall upon those who, through a protracted struggle, have rendered such marked service to our good cause, and have saved me many hundreds of pounds by voluntary and self-sacrificing exertions, not to be purchased by money. Ever grateful as I must be to my Council and to the local committees who conducted my canvass, I hope they will allow me the satisfaction of feeling that their contribution has already been made, and that I am completely rewarded by the result of their united exertions."

In entering Parliament Charles Reed did not stand on the footing of many new members, to whom the life of the House of Commons is unfamiliar. For years his brother-in-law, the Right Hon. Matthew Talbot Baines, who was successively President of the Poor Law Board and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, had been a constant

visitor at his Hackney home; and, after his death, he had been on the closest terms of intimacy with his wife's second brother, Edward, who for many years was member for Leeds. Thus he was ready at once to begin work; and an early occasion was given him of moving in a matter, with the bearings of which he was personally acquainted.

A decision had recently been given by the House of Lords, to the effect that all schools not held in or under a church or chapel were liable to pay poor rates. Charles Reed had interested himself in 1868 in collecting statistics as to the burdensome character of this tax, and in the following January an association was formed for securing the exemption of Sunday and Ragged Schools. He introduced a Bill on the subject, and made his maiden speech in its support. It is worthy of notice that, in his opening words, he strikes the key-note of his subsequent career. "It is a source of satisfaction to feel that no question is more interesting to Parliament than that of education, and the solution of the great problem how best to promote primary instruction and the elevation of the humblest classes."

He proceeded to sketch the growth of Sunday

Schools, and claimed liberty, after himself taking part in their work for nearly forty years, to protest against the infliction of a burden they were ill able to bear :—

"Now I ask the House to look at the anomaly of our present position. Beneath a chapel, a school is free, whether used as a day or Sunday School. Held in a vestry, a school is exempt, but in a separate building, ten feet from the place of worship, it is to be rated. See how that works. For half a century our Sunday schools have been held in church pews, vestries, outhouses; I myself have visited one in a belfry in a church-tower. The places have been ill-adapted, crowded, the air impure, and the light deficient. During the last twenty years the laws of health have been consulted, large sums have been expended to secure proper buildings—airy and light, and free from the depressing gloom by which many of our schools are pervaded; light and pure air are essential to successful teaching. Now what will happen? The ill-conditioned schools go free, the improved schools are rated; that is, you place a tax upon improvements, and drive back the progress of the century. Then, Sir, it is unfair to the teachers, because, when their

labour is gratuitous, the main cost of the management of these schools falls upon them. There is no income; there are no school pence; they have no endowment, and do not want any. Long since the payment of a shilling a day ceased, and the fifty-two shillings a year of Robert Raikes' time multiplied by 400,000 teachers is the sum which forms the contribution of these voluntary teachers to the education, in the highest sense, of our humblest and destitute classes. But what are we in danger of doing? These teachers tax themselves, and you tax them for doing so. Was there ever so unwise and impolitic a proceeding?"

The objection of cost he answered from a case within his own knowledge.

"A London boy at the age of twelve was already an old criminal. He had been in prison six times before he was eight, and twelve times before he was thirteen. One Sunday morning, released from confinement, he was going, according to his own confession, 'to his work again,' when a touch on the shoulder arrested him. It was not the hand of the policeman this time, but the hand of a Ragged School teacher; and he was

moved, by the 'strange' kindness of the invitation, to enter for the first time a Night School. He was put upon a good course; enabled to earn his living; in time he saved money; and in three years he had settled himself in his own house, and, true to the nature of the British workman, he had taken home to him from the workhouse his father and mother, who were unproductive paupers. Is this nothing? It may be a remarkable case, but it shows the tendency of such institutions to reduce our national burdens already, and proves their advantage to the State."

But where was the line to be drawn? If Sunday and Ragged Schools were to be exempted on the ground that they were a national benefit, the same plea might be advanced on behalf of a hundred other institutions; while any private citizen, who was not troubled with modesty, might base a similar claim on the value of his services to the State. To this the mover replied :—

"The Right Honourable gentleman says he cannot draw the line. He said so in a debate upon the Hospital Rating Exemption Bill. I answer him, the line is drawn already, and I ask him not to stretch it too tightly. Places of worship are

exempt, Government buildings are free, and University buildings proper are not liable to rate. What I say is this,—If the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, devoted to the religious training of the youth of the wealthy classes, are to be free, the university of labour, the schools of the poor where gratuitous religious instruction is given, ought not to be burdened with an oppressive tax.

"The parents pay rates, the teachers pay theirs; there is no beneficial occupation, and these rooms, from the use of which no penny of profit is sought to be derived, ought not to be assessed. . . . Tax the light-house, the life-boat, the fire-escape if you will, but let Bible instruction escape your grasp. These schools are not the property of sects for sectarian teaching. I know them through the length and breadth of the land; they are used simply for instruction in Scripture truth and the practice of Christian virtue."

The Bill was opposed by the front benches on both sides of the House as an indirect form of endowment; but the feeling in its favour was so strong that, at the risk of establishing a dangerous precedent, the second reading was carried by 228 votes to 71. In Committee Mr. Gladstone announced that, after so unmistakable an expression

of the mind of the House, he would not offer any further opposition; and at a later sitting he acknowledged, with characteristic frankness, that "the principle of the Bill had not been given up; on the contrary, the honourable member for Hackney had achieved a victory over the Government, which had yielded its opposition."

In the Lords an unexpectedly easy passage awaited the Bill. The Earl of Shaftesbury took charge of it; an amendment in the name of Lord Beauchamp fell through, and before the end of July the Royal assent was given. The battle was won, it must be admitted, by generous instincts as against the sterner rules of political economy; but it did credit to the enterprise and skill of a private member that he was able to carry such a measure in the face of powerful opposition. In one respect the opposition left its mark. The wording of the Bill was made permissive, so that some rating authorities have been able to refuse to avail themselves of its provisions.

The Session of 1870 found Charles Reed fully engaged in following the course of the Elementary Education Bill through the House of Commons; but this subject it will be better to reserve for the next chapter.

In the course of the same year he moved a resolution in reference to Sunday labour in the Post Office. This was not a new question with him, but one in which he had interested himself as far back as 1849. The terms of his present motion were these:—

"That the employment by the State of upwards of twenty thousand persons in the department of the Post Office on the Sabbath day is not justified by any public necessity; and that it is desirable that the exemption from Sunday labour enjoyed by the letter carriers of London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Belfast, and a hundred and fourteen other post towns, should be extended to all letter carriers and rural messengers throughout the United Kingdom."

Here again, perhaps, may be recognised the philanthropist rather than the politician — the warm heart of one who would make the public convenience bend to the comfort of public servants, and their unabridged possession of religious privilege.

The proposal was met by practical difficulties of which sufficient account had not been taken; but none the less was the excellence of the mover's

object acknowledged. He wished others to enjoy what he so highly prized. To quote words spoken over his grave:—

"He felt the blessing which a Christian man of business and public life finds in turning the key upon the world for twenty-four hours, and feeling that, after all, he is but a pilgrim and a stranger, whose home is in the heavenly city. Therefore it was that he was so anxiously concerned to preserve for the workers of our great nation not the restrictions, but the freedom, of the day of rest, and to guard against all those well-meant, but as he believed mistaken, efforts which, by breaking down the ramparts of protection in one direction in order to give instruction and amusement, would open the way for the full incoming of the tide of worldly work."

During the next three years, though daily occupied with the work of the London School Board, Charles Reed continued to give diligent attendance in the House of Commons. But he soon felt that it was undesirable, even if it were possible, for him to speak on other than educational subjects; and by degrees he was led to realise the necessity for releasing himself from Parliamentary duties.

At last, on the retirement of Lord Lawrence and his own appointment to succeed him, he resolved to retire "at any rate for a time." But before he could announce this decision to his constituents, there came like a thunder-clap the dissolution of January, 1874. He immediately drew up his farewell address to his Hackney constituents, but on reflexion felt that he had no option but to withhold it. "This news," he wrote, "came so suddenly as to compel me to reconsider my decision; and on learning that the writ was returnable in ten days, I felt I could not honourably throw the Liberal party in the borough into confusion by declining to stand, when there was no time to secure another candidate." There was moreover the probability that, if the two old members stood together, their return would be unopposed; and he shrank from provoking a contest by precipitate retirement.

This hope proved vain. At the last hour—the very night before the nomination—the Conservatives put up Lieutenant Gill [1]—a young officer who

[1] A mournful interest attaches to the name of this gallant officer, since, in August 1882, he was sharer with Professor Palmer and Lieutenant Charrington in the mission to the Arab tribes east of Suez, which led to the tragic fate of the whole party.

made up in high spirit what he lacked in political experience. The days that followed were spent in the usual ferment that precedes an election, Charles Reed's friends working particularly hard, with the determination of restoring to him the position at the poll which had been denied him at the recent School Board election. The huge borough was thoroughly aroused, and the result awaited with the utmost confidence.

What then were the disappointment and indignation caused by the utter breakdown of the polling arrangements! At first it was impossible to tell the extent of the disaster; those engaged in the election knew only that at several of the stations no ballot boxes had arrived, and that crowds of artisans, who had stayed from their work in order to vote, had been turned away. By ten o'clock the candidates were in conference with the returning officer, a gentleman of the highest standing, who was much distressed at the non-execution of his orders, and said that the only thing to be done was to adjourn the poll to the following day.

This, it was afterwards ascertained, he had no power to do; the votes must be counted in the ordinary way and the result declared, it being left to the unsuccessful candidate to dispute the

validity of the election. But, unfortunately for the Liberals, this discovery was not made early enough in the day to save them from recommending their friends to reserve their energies for the morrow; whereas the Conservatives, better advised, were busy polling every available vote. The consequence was that the figures announced next day were no index whatever of the position of parties in the borough. The old members were returned indeed, but not in the style of 1868. [Holms, 6,968; Reed, 6,893; Gill, 6,310.]

There being little doubt that a petition would be lodged, Charles Reed felt that now was the time for carrying out his original intention, though it went sorely against the grain to retire upon such an unsatisfactory verdict. Accordingly he wrote to the Chairman of his Executive Committee as follows:—

"The experience of the last three years has taught me that I can hardly hope to bear much longer the double strain of public work, involving continuous night attendance at the House of Commons, in addition to my daily duties at the School Board. Were I now to proceed to an election, and should these misgivings be realised, I might be the means of

bringing about a fresh contest at the close of the Session.

"I am thus called upon to relinquish one of the two positions in which I have the honour of representing you; and believing I can be more directly useful in advancing the work of education by devoting to it my undivided energies, I cannot hesitate to give up for it my seat in Parliament. . . . .

"By this early intimation you will, I trust, have ample opportunity to prepare for any contingency, and I hope you may experience no difficulty in securing a candidate whose tried ability will give you some guarantee of faithful service, and who by an established character may lend some political force to the borough. A constituency so thoroughly Liberal as to give me in 1868 a majority of more than twelve thousand votes over my Conservative opponent, is secure of victory, if not unduly confident of success. Your future member, whoever he may be, will find in my friend and colleague, Mr. Holms, an associate well worthy of his confidence and esteem."

Though speaking of the "future member, whoever he may be," Charles Reed had his eye

already directed to one who seemed admirably fitted for the post. In Professor Fawcett, who had just lost his seat for Brighton, he thought he saw a candidate who would be sure to enlist the support of the Liberal party in Hackney. The idea was warmly taken up by his friends; Mr. Fawcett was induced to stand, and in a few weeks he had become the colleague of Mr. Holms. The help he received from his predecessor was cordially acknowledged. "I shall never forget that I owe my introduction to Hackney to his kind initiative; and my first success in the election of 1874, when I was a stranger to the borough, was to a very large extent due to his warm and generous support of my candidature."

A movement among the leading Liberals of the borough, to defray Sir Charles' expenses incurred in the late abortive election, was delayed in consequence of the illness and death of the chairman of his committee; but in the spring of 1876, when he was about to visit Philadelphia, the presentation was made. The balance was expended on a full-length portrait, which now hangs in the Hackney Town Hall as a memorial of the first representative of the borough in Parliament.

In 1879, when another general election was felt to be approaching, Sir Charles was urged in many quarters to offer himself as a candidate. A paper found in his desk shows that, within a few weeks, he declined offers from four constituencies, and that he was sounded by representatives from six more. The last chapter will tell how he re-entered Parliament a few months before his death as member for the Cornish borough of St. Ives. It may, however, be mentioned here, that in the several divisions of 1880 and 1881 upon the question of Mr. Bradlaugh's admission to the House of Commons, he did not vote with his party. Having always opposed religious tests, he was not likely to overlook the folly of instituting an inquisition into the theological opinions of any duly elected member. Yet so profoundly convinced was he of the debasing and subversive tendency of Mr. Bradlaugh's teaching, that, seeing the latter had put himself flagrantly in the wrong, he was no more prepared to help him out of his difficulty than he would have been, had the member for Northampton avowed himself an enemy of the Queen.

CHAPTER VIII.

VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE SCHOOL BOARD FOR LONDON.

"The good begun by thee shall onward flow
In many a branching stream, and wider grow;
The seed that in these few and fleeting hours
Thy hands unsparing and unwearied sow,
Shall deck thy grave with amaranthine flowers,
And yield thee fruit divine, in heaven's immortal bowers."

"THE Parliament," said Hooker, "is a court not so merely temporal as if it might meddle with nothing but only leather and wood." Few would care to dispute this judicious view of the negative functions of the legislature; but probably as few would be found to agree on the precise point to which its positive duty extended. This might be illustrated from the very diverse opinions which have been held by different persons, and even by the same persons at different times, as to the proper attitude of the State towards popular education. The old Voluntaries,

for example, long denied the right of Government to interfere at all with so sacred a matter; yet in process of time they came round, almost to a man, to look with favour upon the establishment of a national system. Charles Reed was one of those who underwent this change. By birth, by early training, and by personal conviction he was a Voluntary of the Voluntaries; yet in 1870 no member of the House of Commons was prepared to give a heartier greeting to Mr. Forster's bill. Whence, we are compelled to ask, this altered position? And further, how came it that he, together with a few prominent Nonconformists, remained loyal to the Government and its proposals, at a time when most of those with whom he had been wont to act were filled with mistrust and alarm?

The first of these questions cannot be answered without a glance at the landmarks of English primary education. When the century opened, Andrew Bell had just introduced from Madras his successful monitorial system. The inexpensive character of this system commended it to Joseph Lankester, who had long felt that the great barrier to the spread of education was its costliness; and out of his enthusiastic labours sprang

the British and Foreign School Society, founded in 1808. In the constitution of this Society it was provided that the Bible should be read in school and simple explanations be given by the teacher, but that no denominational formularies should be allowed.

The success of this movement stirred the Church party to action. The old doctrine that it was wrong to educate the children of the poor retired from view abashed; but it was felt that, if they were to be taught, the religious instruction must not be left so "perilously vague," but be strengthened by a backbone of distinctive Church teaching. With this object, avowed in its very title, the National Society was established in 1811; and from that time it was made plain that two influential parties existed in the country, both agreed that no education deserved the name unless it were "religious," but differing fundamentally in the sense they attached to that elastic term.

One of the first convictions to settle upon the Reformed Parliament of 1832 was that private enterprise could never overtake the requirements of the nation without assistance; and in 1833 building grants began to be given to the amount of 20,000*l.* a year, divided equally between the

British and National Societies. When, six years later, the Committee of Council was appointed and offers of aid for school maintenance were made, these offers found the Nonconformists already divided. Some objected altogether to the proposed subsidy, on the ground that it would check the freedom they enjoyed in their schools and unduly augment the power of the Established Church; while others were persuaded that the State must supplement voluntary agency in some way, and that its aid might be accepted in so far as secular instruction in the schools was concerned.

These parties were for a time re-united in the vehement resistance evoked by Sir James Graham's Bill of 1843, and to a less degree in the opposition offered to the Minutes of 1846. But when these crises were past, the fissure again opened, and the sections led respectively by Mr. Edward Baines, junior (now Sir Edward Baines), and Dr. Robert Vaughan, the editor of the *British Quarterly*, engaged one another valorously in the lists, while a thoroughgoing advocate of state-education like Dr. Hook came in for blows from both sides. Still the inability of the Voluntaries to meet the growing demand for education became so obvious that at last they were forced to yield.

"It is clear," said Mr. Baines in 1867, "that if the body of the people demand the application of public money and authority to the providing of schools, it would be vain either to resist the demand, or to compete with schools which are supported by the whole national resources and by popular favour." Yet, while acknowledging their defeat, the Voluntaries had the satisfaction of feeling that their work, if inadequate, was sterling so far as it went, and that their long and disinterested contention had secured that, in any Government measure, the principle of unsectarian religious instruction would be respected.

When Mr. Forster and his colleagues were preparing their Bill, they had two courses before them, either to establish a system that would supersede the Voluntary schools, or one which would live beside them in healthy rivalry. There were counsellors who strongly urged the former course; the Voluntary schools had as a whole failed, and the sooner they gave place to something else the better. The case against them was made strong by the vast number of children remaining untaught, by the poor results of the secular instruction, and by the intensely sectarian

character of many of the National schools. But the case failed through the very strength with which it was presented; for if these schools had so misconducted themselves, not only did they deserve no fresh aid out of the rates, but they deserved to lose the Government grant they now received; and for the infliction of such a punishment as that, the nation was not prepared.

Still it was not surprising that those who took so decided a view of the shortcomings of the denominational schools should energetically protest against the arrangements in their favour contained in the Bill. The examination grant was to be enhanced, several months were to be allowed for claiming building grants, and boards were to be empowered to pay the fees of their indigent scholars. This opened a truly ominous prospect; for what was to hinder a thoroughly sectarian school from being maintained wholly at the public cost; and might not school boards turn out to be simply an organization for imposing church rates in a new form?

Those who were swayed by these considerations felt that there was but one way out of the difficulty, and Mr. Henry Richard announced that way in his motion of June 19, 1870: "That in any national system the religious instruction

should be supplied by voluntary effort, and not out of public funds." As it was, Government inspection of religious teaching was to cease, and this teaching was required to be given during the first hour of the day. Carry this separation, it was urged, one step further; prohibit the teaching of the Bible altogether by the teacher, who in part at any rate is paid by the State, and let the zeal of the churches be aroused to do the work that properly belongs to them. May they not realise their responsibility more strongly, when the whole religious instruction of the young is thrown upon them, than they do now, when they are apt to be satisfied with the slender amount of instruction given in the day school?

This reasoning was ably sustained; but Charles Reed was among those who failed to be convinced by it. He was too sensible of the good done by the Voluntary schools in the past, and of which, with proper safeguards, they were capable in the future, to wish to see them hampered, and still less overpowered. Not that he did not sympathize to a certain extent with their opponents. In his speech of June 23 he cited a gross case of clerical intolerance in connexion with a school in Sussex, and said: "It was such acts as these that led many Dissenters to say,

rather than run the risk of the licence to read the Bible being made the vehicle for the clergy forcing their views upon the children, they would unite with the League in demanding that no reference to religion should be permitted. It was only because he thought he saw in the Bill a provision against those abuses that he did not vote with his hon. friend (Mr. Richard), but on the contrary gave a frank support to the Government." Indeed, he himself proposed that in rate-aided schools, not only should no catechism be used, but that "no teaching having reference to the doctrinal peculiarities of any religious denomination should be permitted."

But further than this he was not prepared to go. The secular proposal seemed to him to break down on every side. Look at it from the side of the *Churches.* Were they likely to be able to organize a plan, not for the *occasional,* but for the *daily,* religious instruction of the children? and if they succeeded, was the teaching to be of that "colourless" kind on which all might be agreed, or must the youthful Wesleyans, Churchmen, and Unitarians, be drafted off into little denominational groups? Or consider it from the side of the *children.* He could not persuade himself that the plan would be effectual. "If

the attendance is to be obligatory, the children will feel the subject of religion distasteful [it being imposed as an extra task], while if the attendance be optional, as soon as the voluntary religious teachers walk in at one door, the liberated children will march out at the other." As to the *teachers*, it might be said that their conscience need not be offended when a lesson in needlework or arithmetic was given without reference to religion; but to his mind it made a vital difference that the secularists proposed to *forbid* any such reference on the part of the teachers, and to forbid it to teachers who, if they were of the right stamp, would never be able to feel that their duty to the children was covered or exhausted by secular instruction. "No high-minded teacher would consent to be prohibited from referring to God's authority as above his own." While, once more, the *parent* must not be forgotten. It was often suggested in a disdainful tone that the parent's scruples were a myth, since in reality he did not care whether his child was taught the Bible or not; and that, if he did care, there could be no objection to his child receiving any kind or amount of religious instruction, provided other people were not expected to pay for it. Charles Reed, on the contrary, had a

strong sympathy with the parent. He believed—and the general result of school board elections has confirmed the belief—that the working classes did desire the retention of the Bible in the schools, and that they would regard the injustice complained of as reduced to the vanishing point, if proper safeguards were taken against sectarian teaching. Was not the "injustice" indeed of a kind which the secularists themselves could not remove, unless they could secure teachers so loftily superior to religious partialities as to influence their pupils in favour of no opinion or denomination whatever?

"The fact," he said, "was this, that a new party had appeared in the country advocating a system void of religion, and they dignified it by the name of education. If he knew the meaning of words, this was a misapplication of terms. Children were compound beings, gifted with a moral as well as an intellectual nature, and if we desired to reclaim and to rescue, we must deal with the heart as well as the head. . . . The neglected children were most in need of the kindly influences by which conscience was touched, virtue implanted, and character moulded and fashioned; and the power of the teacher rested

mainly in such forces as had their ultimate appeal in God's Holy Word. The secular system separated knowledge from wisdom; but 'the fear of the Lord was the beginning of wisdom.'"

The support which, for the above reasons, he gave to Mr. Forster's Bill, cost him not a little pain in the temporary withdrawal of sympathy on the part of many of his old associates and friends. Looking back upon the controversy after the lapse of a decade, one may discern a lack of understanding on both sides. The party to which Charles Reed belonged did not always sufficiently bear in mind that most of those who were for shutting the Bible out of the school were prompted solely by reverence for that Book, and reluctance to see it taught by unsympathetic teachers, and at the expense of objecting ratepayers. On the other hand, his party certainly did not deserve to be charged with unfaithfulness to the great principles of religious liberty; while experience has shown that the attempt to sever the religious from the secular in elementary schools is not likely to be successful. It has been made in Birmingham with all the advantage of zeal and perseverance on the part of those who volunteered to act as religious teachers to the board scholars;

but after nine years' trial it was found to be necessary to readmit the proscribed Book. Fearful, however, of allowing the teacher any liberty of explanation, the Birmingham Board has not followed the example of London, but enacted that the Bible, alone of all books used in the school, is to be read *without note or comment*. One is not surprised to learn that this regulation has not been popular with the teachers. "Some," writes a well-informed resident, "have accepted posts without knowing that their hands were thus tied, and have expressed dissatisfaction when they found it out. The present system especially is felt by almost all to be an educational absurdity." [1]

It is well known that the Metropolis was omitted from the original draft of the Elementary

[1] The following are the first and second regulations made by the Birmingham School Board on December 4, 1880, and now in force :—

"(1.) The Bible shall be read daily, without note or comment, by the head teacher; or, in the absence of the head teacher, by the teacher in charge of the school.

"(2.) The portion to be read shall be suitable to the capacity of the children, and shall be selected by the head teacher, who shall, at the close of each reading, make a record of the portion read in a book to be provided for the purpose."

Compare this with the London rule (p. 152).

Education Bill because of its size and of the peculiar difficulties, especially in regard to compulsion, which it was expected to present. When, however, it came to be included, the Government determined to lose no time in grappling with those difficulties. Without leaving it to the choice of the ratepayers, Parliament enacted that a School Board should forthwith be elected.

This decision opened to Charles Reed a prospect of work that he loved, and for which his previous life had given exceptional training. He offered himself as a candidate for the division of Hackney and was returned at the head of the poll, some four thousand votes above the second on the list. Within a few days of the election he received a requisition asking him, on the ground of his long connexion with London schools, to allow himself to be nominated for the Chairmanship of the Board. To this he assented, it being thought at the time that a member of the House of Commons would be preferred for the post. As soon, however, as it was known that Lord Lawrence would be willing to accept the Chair were it offered to him, there was a strong desire to secure the advantage of his leadership. He was accordingly appointed by a considerable

majority, Charles Reed, who came next, being unanimously chosen Vice-Chairman.

It is not the purpose of this volume to dwell on the history of the Board further than may be necessary in order to show the part borne by Charles Reed in helping to determine its character. The stages of that great work are marked in official documents; while for a more extended and critical survey the time has perhaps not yet arrived. "No one," he said, "presumes to judge of a building while the scaffolding still stands, and for our part we are content to leave it to the generation now under instruction to deliver its verdict upon the efforts which have cost us years of unremitting toil."

It was natural that men impressed with the magnitude of the task before them should preface action by careful survey and inquiry. Their first step was to make an educational census. At the end of 1871, when this was completed, London was found to contain 575,000 children of school age and of the class requiring to be dealt with by the Board. The amount of Voluntary provision was taken at 351,000, but some of this was found to be only semi-efficient, and in the end about 89,000 places had to be left out of

the calculation. As this reduced the available existing accommodation to 262,000, it was clearly a moderate estimate that led the Board in the first instance to apply to the Education Department for leave to build schools for 100,000 children.

But, while this deliberation did not satisfy those who were burning to do great things, a vigour was displayed in other directions as little to the mind of those who wished the Board to do nothing. "It was open to us to avoid or to delay action, but we resolved on an instant assault upon the common foe." This was effected by putting into force the compulsory powers conferred by the Act. There was no reason why the Voluntary schools should not be filled up while the Board schools were building. Bye-laws were therefore framed, requiring the attendance of every child at some efficient school chosen by the parent. and a committee was appointed to carry them out in districts where the accommodation was adequate.

It was an immense advantage that the *personnel* of the first Board was so strong. Questions of principle had to be discussed, and lines of policy adopted, which required breadth and clearness of view, sympathy, courage, and (above all) experience. These qualities belonged to a large

proportion of the members; indeed of hardly one could it be said that he was not deeply and intelligently interested in the work. The general course of instruction was drafted by a committee of which Professor Huxley was chairman; and it was determined to give the children not as little, but as much, as the Code sanctioned, so that such compensation as was possible might be made to those who were placed by poverty under great natural disadvantages.

The "religious difficulty" was dealt with before the Board had been in existence three months. After some consultation out of doors, and conversation rather than debate in the council-room of the Guildhall, the following resolution was passed, with only three dissentients, viz. "that in the schools provided by the Board, the Bible shall be read, and there shall be given such explanations and such instructions therefrom in the principles of morality and religion as are suited to the capacity of children; provided always that in such explanations and instruction the provisions of the Act in Sections VII. and XIV. be strictly observed, and that no attempt be made in any such schools to attach children to any particular denomination." The exact form of words is

understood to have been suggested by Mr. W. H. Smith and the Rev. Dr. Angus, while Viscount Sandon, Mr. Samuel Morley, and the Vice-Chairman were prominent in its support. The compromise, as it was called, was based on the old formula of the British schools, and commended itself so generally through the country that it was quickly adopted by most of the provincial Boards; and so satisfactory is its operation thought to have been that in some influential quarters the religious difficulty is regarded as finally disposed of.

Not that all share this opinion or join the chorus of congratulation. There are those who "prefer to remain silent," and who consider that, if there be no religious difficulty left, this is only because there is no religion in the Board Schools. The children may be taught "to distinguish between the Sea of Galilee and the Mediterranean;" those in the upper standards may even "learn enough about the stories contained in Holy Scripture to pass a satisfactory examination;" while "the oral teaching—so far as it does not consist of geographical and historical illustration—is in all probability mainly ethical, with some general appeals to the authority and love of God, and to future rewards and punishments."[1]

[1] *Nineteenth Century*, January, 1883, p. 65; March, 1883, p. 485.

Some will be disposed to think that, even on this showing, the "unsectarian religion" of the Board Schools is not valueless. But there is evidence that it goes much further than is here represented. What the intention of the London Board was is explained by Sir Charles in his address on education delivered before the Social Science Congress at Brighton in 1875, and what the actual working has been may be gathered from the reports of the Board inspectors. "I am convinced," says Mr. Noble in his report for 1876, "that as a body our teachers are faithful men and women, imbued with a high sense of the importance of the relation in which they stand to their children; and while anxious on the one hand to avoid giving a denominational character to their Scripture teaching, they earnestly inculcate those great truths, as essential to the moral and religious well-being of the children." "Almost without exception," says another inspector in 1881, "the teachers give to it [the Bible instruction] all that care and attention which the importance of the subject demands."

The share taken by Charles Reed in the early work of the Board was considerable. During the first winter he undertook an immense amount of

labour in getting things into shape, originating the committees, and assigning them their limits; and when temporary offices were taken for the Board in New Bridge Street, he had to make most of the arrangements. Besides his duties as Vice-Chairman of the Board, and *ex officio* member of all committees, he acted during the first three years as Chairman of the Works Committee, which had to superintend the erection of all new schools. One who was associated with him from the outset, wrote, after his death:—"I cannot say that, on his appointment to the Chairmanship, he gave more time and labour to the work of the Board than before; for from beginning to end he gave as much time and labour as any man could possibly give, who still had other and important public duties. Nor was his attention confined to the meetings at the head office; a very considerable portion of every working day was set apart for the business of the Divisional Committees, and the management and visitation of schools."

On the first assembling of the Board a proposal was made that its meetings should be opened with prayer. This not proving acceptable to all the members, those chiefly interested met to consider what course to take, and it was resolved,

on the motion of Lord Sandon, to present a requisition to the Chairman for a room for the purpose. "An excellent proposal," says Mr. Macgregor, "to which we got thirty-eight signatures, including that of Professor Huxley." This little gathering, held before each meeting of the Board, was kept up from that time, the Vice-Chairman being among the most regular attendants. He used often to refer to it at home as a refreshment amid the heavy responsibilities and details of the work, and as a pleasant indication of the spirit in which the duties of the Board were approached by many of its members.

CHAPTER IX.

CHAIRMAN OF THE SCHOOL BOARD, 1873–6.

> "Fame with men,
> Being but ampler means to serve mankind,
> Should have small rest or pleasure in herself,
> But work as vassal to the larger love
> That dwarfs the petty love of one to one."

THE three years of Charles Reed's life covered by the last chapter were followed by a short holiday in America, through which it may be well to trace his steps, before continuing the narrative of his London work. In paying this visit, he gratified a long-cherished desire to inspect the school system of the United States, and to go over ground which his father had traversed in the year 1834, when sent by the Congregational Union of England and Wales to the sister churches beyond the sea.

He sailed at the beginning of August, with his

friend Mr. Carvell Williams. The rough passage suited one who was always a good sailor; he was in high spirits; and while the sufferers below were many, "Reed was on deck the whole day, enjoying everything—meals, wind, company, all." The "company" included some highly cultivated Americans who were interested in all he had to tell them about his home and work, not forgetting the borough he represented. "You must promise me," he said on parting, "that you will never hear a thing called *hackneyed* without thinking of me." The company also included one American who was not cultivated, save in the sense that he was sought out for the amusement he afforded to his fellow-passengers.

"Last night was wet, and Mr. —— offered us an instructive lecture. It was a bold proposal; but the author took for granted our entire satisfaction. A deputation came to me to say that, as it was a political lecture, it was desired that I should preside. Knowing my man, and that he had himself sent these people to ensnare me, I declined. It was well I did, else the first thing I should have seen in the papers would probably have been this:—'Mr. ex-senator —— arrived on board the *Oceanic* on Monday last. He formed

one of a distinguished party of American voyagers, and was honoured by a request to deliver a statement of his views upon the Southern Rebellion and things in general. A member of the British legislature was gratified by presiding. . . . .' The address was an attack on party spirit; and though most of us were convulsed with laughter, the lecturer had the full conviction that he was warmly applauded. A vote of thanks was passed, which he acknowledged, and only when a young New Jersey man moved *that the lecturer do lie on the table*, did the latter discover that the rule of order was not paramount. Notwithstanding this, he observed to me that he thought the *elder* portion of his audience had been edified; and that, as he heard of my interest in education, he would give me his views on that question, which was undoubtedly the *taproot* of England's weakness and decay."

During the evenings, Charles Reed interested the company in the autographs with which his portmanteau was, as usual, liberally furnished; and on Sunday he joined Mr. Williams in getting up services for the steerage passengers. More fun was extracted from the lecturer, when an "original song" which he produced was found

to be borrowed almost line for line from Hood. This interesting person turned out to be a prosperous undertaker, who had recently purchased a good-sized forest for the purposes of his trade, and was expecting a brisk season.

On landing in New York, Charles Reed escaped the interviewers, who desired a summary of the opinions of "Mr. Peabody's British executor," and spent a few days at Long Branch. At Philadelphia he rejoined his travelling companion, and they went over some large institutions. Then followed a "charming visit" to Lucretia Mott:—

"She is eighty-one years of age, and used to be the best speaker the Friends had. She talked so pleasantly of Brougham, Macaulay, Clarkson, Wilberforce, and others, including O'Connell, who defended the claim of the American lady delegates to speak in the London Conference of 1842—a circumstance that Williams and I well recollect. She knew the name of Edward Baines, and talked much of George Thompson. Singular that she should have with her the very men who entered public life by working for, and winning, Thompson's election!"

To the relics shown at the State House, Charles

Reed added an autograph letter of William Penn the elder, which he had taken out for the purpose. After a hurried visit to the scenes of George Peabody's early life at Baltimore, the travellers proceeded to Washington and made the usual pilgrimage to Mount Vernon. As Dr. Andrew Reed had published a remonstrance on the neglected state into which the great General's tomb had been allowed to fall, it was a satisfaction to his son to find that the remains had been removed to an inclosure, unpretending indeed, but well cared for, and impressive from its very simplicity.

From Harper's Ferry they made their way to Cincinnati and Louisville, and from the natural wonders of the Kentucky Caves to the artificial wonders of Chicago. Having incautiously expressed a wish to see some Sunday Schools, they were taken by a zealous church-officer on a round of several hours, finishing with the coloured school :—

"I had never before seen a great company of black faces; and the faces being those of children, I was much moved. The singing was like that of the Jubilee Singers, but of course less refined. Then came an ominous announce-

ment that the brothers from the old country (England, not Africa) would speak. We obeyed; then a black man rose and said, 'Elder, I ask to move thanks to brothers Reed and Williams'; another rose and said, 'I second'; the elder said, 'Motion proposed and seconded; who approve, stand to their feet.' In an instant all rose. I responded, saying that, as they had thanked us for coming, we felt inclined to come again, and if they would invite us to the concert the next night (advertised on the wall), we should like to come. This took uncommonly, and we are in for it."

Accordingly the following evening they sallied forth to find Quinn's Chapel.

"'I ought to tell you,' said a gentleman of whom we inquired the way, 'that it must be in the lowest part of Chicago, all among the blacks and the worst characters.' I suggested that there were good people even among the blacks; but we went with the impression that the district was like Shadwell or Ratcliff Highway. At length we found it, twenty minutes after time. The first piece was being sung, and a tolerable affair it was. But the place was fitted up in great style, by the aid of scissors, paste, pink calico, and yellow paper.

In front of the organ was a platform, and on this were ranged some fifty darkies of both sexes, and all ages. The dresses of the men were black, with light ties and white gloves; the costumes of the ladies, indescribable—white muslin, blue, green, yellow, and such sashes! Fans hanging at the girdle, bouquets, lace handkerchiefs, and boots of every imaginable colour. The singing was poor, the playing passionless, the pieces too ambitious. . . . Then came the supper, prepared in a building some distance off. 'We must go,' said my companion. So we went; but for a crush it beat anything I had ever seen; and the people, so civil and delighted, were yet so hot and demonstrative that we could endure it no longer, especially when we found that supper would not be over till nearly midnight, and that then there was to be a meeting!"

Dr. Reed's printed description of Niagara relieved his son from the necessity of communicating to his family his own impressions of the scene; but the fact that his companion and he permitted themselves to be photographed on the bank, with the waters meekly foaming in the background, would seem to show that they were not duly awed by the spectacle. On reaching Boston, Charles

Reed visited the Peabody Institute, and made the acquaintance of several members of the Peabody family. After spending some very pleasant days with the Longfellows at Cambridge, he returned to New York for the international conference of the Evangelical Alliance. He was not alone in his surprise at the enthusiasm called forth by these meetings.

"The interest has been so well kept up for a week, that the New York press is astonished, and the Roman Catholic papers are aroused to bitterness. I never saw anything like it; the impression can never be effaced. On the Sunday night I spoke at the Academy of Music to five thousand of the best people in the city; and again at Brooklyn I was to speak, but ten o'clock came and I left. I heard afterwards that I. was called on at a quarter before eleven, when three thousand people were still remaining."

Some American friends who heard his speech that evening describe it as impassioned and most telling: "He was a great favourite with our audiences; he had none of the angularity that marks some of our speakers, but a perfectly easy address which took the hearer captive." One

who saw him often on his journey observed that he brimmed over with fun, but was soon run down and depressed about his health. This was due partly to the trying heat of the season, and partly to the vexatious miscarriage of most of his letters from home. Still, he was greatly benefited by the change; and when at the end of October he was again in London, he applied himself with vigour to preparing for the approaching School Board election.

His preparation, however, proved inadequate. He fell into the error of supposing that the electors of a great constituency could be as well acquainted with his past labours on the Board as was the inner circle of his friends; and hence he contented himself with a very imperfect canvass and organization. Nor did he duly reflect that the contest was likely to be decided on religious rather than on educational ground, and that the Board "compromise" did not satisfy either of the extreme parties. When the day of poll arrived, he all but lost his seat. Three denominational candidates were at the top; then came the representative of the advanced party, while he had to accept the small mercies of last place.

The even balance of parties on the new Board

made the choice of a successor to Lord Lawrence a matter of keen speculation. The names of Mr. W. H. Smith and Lord Napier and Ettrick were suggested; but after a preliminary meeting it was determined not to offer any opposition to the election of one, "who had for three years devoted himself heart and soul to the business with such zeal, energy, tact, and common sense as to win the regard of every member of the old Board." The post remained, as it still continues to be, purely honorary.

A few weeks after this appointment, Charles Reed received through Mr. Gladstone an offer of knighthood, "in acknowledgment not only of your general character and position, but especially of your services on and to the London School Board." In intimating to his colleagues his acceptance of this distinction, he represented it as a compliment paid not so much to himself as to the Board, which, he said, was "deserving of any honour that could be conferred upon it."

It was significant of the new element introduced into the Board, that the next entry on the minutes, after the record of the knighthood, is one of a motion challenging the statistics on which sites had been selected and schools erected, and

demanding a committee to examine into injury alleged to have been suffered by Voluntary schools. This motion was proposed by Canon Gregory, who, with Dr. Irons and Canon Cromwell, led an influential party returned mainly with a view to guarding the interests of existing schools. The debates that ensued were well sustained, and not infrequently were decided only by the casting vote of the Chairman. He himself, interpreting his duty to be that of moderating the deliberations of his colleagues and facilitating administrative work, spoke but rarely at the ordinary meetings. But while there is little in the minutes to show his opinion beyond the record of his votes, ample material exists in the statements which he made from the Chair after each summer recess. The Board and the public alike appreciated a periodical review, which possessed the boldness and freshness of individual authorship; and the practice is maintained by the present Chairman.

The first of Sir Charles' statements was made in 1874, the last in 1880; during this period he devoted no small part of his vacations to arranging the voluminous reports and tables furnished from the offices of the Board. When that for 1880 had to be written, he remarked to one of his sons:—"I think this will be my last; I should like to make

it as strong as I can, and then perhaps publish the series." It is doubtful whether he would have wished to do this, when he came to consider the fragmentary, and to some extent the ephemeral, nature of such productions; but the reader may feel interested to find in the appendix to this volume his last statement, which sums up the first decade of the Board's work.

Many of the objections which he had to combat on these occasions are heard no longer, and it would be a waste of time to blow upon dead fires. "If I refer to opposition encountered by the Board, it is not to express surprise or annoyance, yet neither is it to offer apology"; and he proceeded —this was in 1875—to answer the Vestries that had memorialised the Board on the subject of the rate, and had favoured it at the same time with their advice on teachers' salaries, the proper standard of instruction, and the impropriety of interfering with parents. After dealing patiently with these critics, the Chairman turned to his colleagues and said:—

"Standing on the threshold of a year in which our work is not likely to be less arduous than in any of its predecessors, nothing but a high and disinterested motive can sustain the

members of this Board. Such a motive is, however, supplied by their common and earnest desire to train the youth of London, by a sound education, to habits of frugality, industry, and virtue. Looked at even from a pecuniary point of view, it is of incalculable benefit to the community that these features should be developed in the young; but those who are, like ourselves, practically acquainted with the homes of many of our children—if homes they may be called—and have contrasted the demoralising effects of such an atmosphere with the cleanliness, bright companionships, and happy influences of our schools, are able to work on with a firm conviction that such processes must tend to lift the children up to stronger manhood and purer womanhood. To hesitate in our work would be fatal to its success. Each year has brought us great results; and if we are faithful and unswerving, we shall yet accomplish our cherished purpose; only let this, which is my final word, be also our motto for the future —*Nothing less than thorough will do it.*"

This motto agreed with Sir Charles's words on being elected to the Chair: "I trust," he said, "the Board will remember that the only work we have to consider is how best to provide a good

and sound education for the poor children of the metropolis." To do the best—this was his constant aim. He was for getting the best teachers, cost what it might, because he was convinced that the very large departments contained in the Board Schools—schools numbering from seven to seventeen hundred children—could never be properly controlled by second-rate teachers, and that it was sheer folly, considering the expense and difficulty of compelling the children to attend, not to make the best use of their time when there.

For the same reason he always advocated the most liberal interpretation of the Code. The idea of limiting instruction to the elementary subjects—which by the way he never would call the three R's—appeared to him suicidal. If the State gave any education at all, the truest economy was to make it as good and attractive as possible. Boys and girls, it must be remembered, are sure to forget much after they leave school. If, then, they are to retain a sufficent equipment for the wants of life, they must be generously stored in early days. For a lad to become what is known as a reader, that is, for him to become fond of reading, so as to turn to books in his leisure hours, it is not enough to teach him to spell, and tramp mechanically through a page of print; he

must be made to read with ease, and you must give him some conception of the treasure-house to which reading supplies the key. If he be lifted only high enough to peep over the edge of the goodly plain, he will not be able to range over it as he might, if made to stand freely upon its surface and with a good steed at command. In the former case he will deserve Mr. Ruskin's pity for the hapless school-child who is shut out from dreamland and poetry, and who "spends his years as a tale that is *not* told."

The working out of the religious teaching gave Sir Charles great interest; and as he paid frequent visits to the schools of his Division in the morning, when the Scripture lesson was being given, he had constant opportunity of satisfying himself that the instructions of the Board were observed. He rejoiced in the incentive afforded to this part of the daily school work by the liberality of Mr. Francis Peek and the Committee of the Religious Tract Society, of which he was a member. A yearly fund of 500*l.* was thus provided for prizes in Scripture knowledge; and these were competed for by an amazing number of children. Speaking on this subject in 1878 he said:—

"As is well-known, Bible instruction with

simple religious exercises forms a part of the daily programme in each school; but as the Government inspection does not extend to this subject, our judgment of results has to be formed upon our own annual examination. In distributing the prizes this year at the Crystal Palace, I took occasion to say—and the Vice-President of the Privy Council subsequently quoted it in Parliament as a remarkable fact — that the number of children who voluntarily entered the competition this year was 104,909, against 82,062 in 1877.[1] Besides these, 1,403 pupil teachers submitted themselves to examination. While many of the answers are reported to us as superficial, some were extremely good. Thus, whereas some even of the pupil teachers could find in the parable of the Good Samaritan no further lesson than that we should be "kind to people," a boy in the sixth standard summed up the lessons to be gathered in these words: "Those whom we may count as our enemies are often our best friends. We should love our enemies. A good action is its own reward. No doubt if a crowd of people had been near, the priest or the Levite would have given help, in order to have received the praise of men."

[1] In 1882 the number of children who entered was 158,000.

Many of his visits to schools were for the purpose of investigating complaints. He had very little faith in correspondence as a means of clearing away difficulties; wherever possible, he preferred to go himself without delay, and meet the teachers or parents concerned. These visits gave him also opportunities of intercourse with the local managers, on whose willing co-operation he felt the success of the Board School system in no small degree depended. The teachers must need the sympathy of ladies and gentlemen residing in the neighbourhood of their schools; while the Board must equally need the advice of local committees prepared to devote the necessary time to going into the innumerable details of school management. The difficult question, which cannot be said yet to be solved, was how to give these managers sufficient power to secure their continued interest in the schools, without the Board divesting itself of responsibilities that properly attached to it.

In the spring of 1876 Sir Charles was appointed Judge for Great Britain in the section of Education at the Centennial Exhibition, Philadelphia. This second visit to America involved his absence from the chair of the Board for about ten weeks, and

does not call for special remark. He was ashamed, on reaching Philadelphia, to find the miserable show made by his own country. "Beyond a set of valuable photographs of London Board Schools, there was nothing more important than writing-frames for the blind, Sunday-school registers, a military model apparatus for illustrating drill movements, a few maps, and a solitary example of caligraphy—which last did not arrive. These were followed by twenty-five exhibits of books and engravings, and by four claiming to represent our 'institutions and organisations.'" It was therefore the greater "mark of deference and good will towards Great Britain" that her delegate was chosen President of the Board of Judges in Education. Switzerland, Sweden, and Japan did well; but all were overshadowed by the American display. "It may give an idea of the completeness of the preparations made in this department, to say that every State in the Union was authorised to appoint a commission, a certain sum being voted for the purpose of enabling it to send up a collective exhibit of statistics, literature, and students' work actually done in school and shown in bound volumes." Massachusetts alone filled eight rooms, and there were two kindergartens and

a model school in daily work in the Exhibition grounds.

In his official report Sir Charles directed attention impartially to the defects and excellences of the American system.

"The inferior limit of school age is six years, so that the infant department, as we understand it in this country, is unknown. Many object that the cost would be too great, and that parents should provide for their infant children at home—an argument which they are careful not to push too far." Again—"Teaching is not recognised fully enough as a distinct profession. It is regarded too much as a stepping-stone to some better and more settled position in life. There are more reasons than one for this state of things. The appointment of teachers depends in too many cases, not upon the fitness of the candidates, but upon personal or political reasons; while the low salaries given to all, except the first rank of masters, operate as a hindrance to the teaching profession establishing itself as it ought to do. Female teachers receive salaries so small, especially in the rural districts, that it is no wonder they should be easily induced to better themselves by marriage; and marriage is

almost universally a disqualification for further service."

But against these defects he was forward to acknowledge the immense "advantage which American schools enjoy in the strong public opinion in favour of regular attendance and liberal support, while they are free from the many difficulties that arise out of the employment of pupil teachers, each school having its full complement of adult teachers."

Shortly after his return from the United States, Sir Charles received the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws from Yale University, and—what he valued even more—the thanks of his colleagues on the Board on the completion of three years of his Chairmanship. "Your whole time and strength and thought have been devoted to the task, not in the spirit of 'cold officiality' sometimes imputed to the School Board system, but in the spirit of faith and love and self-sacrifice."

CHAPTER X.

CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, 1876–81.

"When the world's up and every swarm abroad
Keep thou thy temper, mix not with each clay;
Despatch necessities; life hath a load
Which must be carried on and safely may.
Yet keep these cares without thee; let the heart
Be God's alone, and choose the better part."

If the first School Board for London might be called the Board of exploration, and the second that of attempted denominational reaction, the third, elected in 1876, was the Board of advance. Its character was determined by a revulsion in public feeling, and by the efforts of a committee formed to defend the bold educational policy hitherto adopted. In his own Division of Hackney, Sir Charles was resolved to avoid repeating the mistake of 1873; and although he could point to a record of more than 750 attendances during the past three years, he toiled as

hard in addressing the electors as though he were seeking their suffrages for the first time. His friends responded to the appeal that met their eyes on every hoarding to "rally round Reed," and placed him at the head of the poll with 25,000 votes, his old colleague, Mr. Picton, coming second with 20,000. It was a matter of regret to the more intelligent of all parties that the Rev. John Oakley, of Hoxton, now Dean of Carlisle, was unsuccessful. During his candidature he had earnestly sought to unite all who desired a religious education in the schools, but in vain. This will explain the allusion in the following letter, written by him to Lady Reed at the time of her husband's death :—

"You may not dislike to know how deeply Sir Charles impressed those with whom his religious sympathy may not have been complete, on several public occasions when we were thrown together. In each of these he carried his friendliness to me to the point of doing himself no good with some of his keener supporters, and—if I may add it—to the point of doing me equal damage with my own less tolerant friends! These School Board battles gave me a close view of him. I have seldom met a man whose sense of duty struck me

more, or whose willingness to merge less in greater principles, for the common good, was more free from either weakness or self-seeking."

When the new Board assembled, the Chairman was at once re-elected and work vigorously resumed. Fresh schools were put in hand, as the approval of the Department was received, and enlargements made where required; the *Shaftesbury* training ship was fitted up, in order to give more scope to the Board's efforts to reclaim children of the wastrel class; and a truant school was established, where the lesson of obedience could be taught to unruly boys, without the expense and many dangers incident to sending them for years to a reformatory. Besides this, a lengthy and animated correspondence was carried on with the Department, with a view to secure greater liberty in the planning of schools, and to lighten the burden of returns demanded from the head teachers; a committee was appointed to inquire into City endowments, which might fairly be claimed for purposes of elementary education; and the surplus energies of a part of the Board even ran over upon the uncertain and marshy field of "spelling reform."

The portrait given in the frontispiece represents Sir Charles Reed at the time of life now reached. What his figure lacked in height it gained in erectness and breadth of chest; his step was quick and very decided, his countenance remarkably open; there was in it much to recall Spenser's description—

> "Continuall comfort in a face,
> A full assurance given by lookes."

One or two points in the work of the Board, in addition to those already named, greatly interested him. His sympathy with the Blind, and with the Deaf and Dumb, led him to offer his services as chairman of a sub-committee appointed to superintend their instruction. Classes for the latter were opened at selected centres; but it was soon found impossible for the children to travel long distances to these centres, of which there were only three; and homes had to be established near them. These homes and classes he often visited, either alone or accompanied by friends whom he sought to interest in the work. The lady teacher at the Bethnal Green centre says that her children were inconsolable when they were told of his death, and continued long

to speak of him as the good friend who had loved them.

Amongst those whose sympathy he sought to enlist in the work of the Board was the Princess Louise, to whom the following letter refers:—

"We have had a busy week, now over, and the weather has been bright and cool. On Thursday I had to receive the Princess at a school in Stepney. After waiting an hour, a telegram came to say she would arrive at two instead of twelve; so all the children (1,924) were sent off to dinner and ordered to return at 1.45. I also went away to Mr. Buxton's to lunch. Coming back at 1.30 I found a great crowd about the doors, and children being poured in by anxious parents. Then I discovered that the Princess, fearing lest we might be put about, had come after all at one o'clock, and was actually at the school. She shook hands, and offered many apologies; and as all ended well, we were content.

"We then went to Bethnal Green, driving through Victoria Park. After inspecting the Wilmot Street School, I took leave, promising to lead the way through Shoreditch. When we were in the Bethnal Green Road, I looked back, and found that the party had stopped; and

going back, the equerry said their springs had broken! I at once placed our carriage at the Princess's disposal. This she readily accepted, and we transferred her and Lady Sophia Macnamara, with Colonel Campbell, to our landau. . . . ."

Something has been said, in the third chapter, about Charles Reed's early interest in the teaching of infants. This made him extremely anxious that the Board should adopt the best system in its infant departments, and spare no pains to secure for them competent teachers. On the other hand, he was for giving every possible advantage to advanced pupils. That they should be detained in the ordinary schools, where requisite attention could not be given them, he regarded as a mistake; and had he lived, there can be no question that his sympathy would have gone strongly with the movement for drafting them into higher grade schools, where they could be taught with greater economy and success.

A discussion on the vexed question of Free Schools may be considered out of place in these pages; yet any sketch of Sir Charles' educational work would be incomplete without some reference to his mature opinion on the subject. He knew

the extreme difficulty experienced by the Board in collecting school pence, and in drawing the line between children who could pay and children whose fees must be remitted. To some of his colleagues, the question was but one of degree. Already the State bore by far the larger part of the cost of educating all, and the entire cost of educating many. No new principle would, to their minds, be involved in its accepting the whole burden of giving to all the bare elements of knowledge, it being left to parents to pay for the higher branches; the cost would not be so great as to present a serious obstacle; while the parent, paying in the course of his life as much in school rates as he had now to pay for a few years in the way of school pence, would have no cause to feel humiliated—less cause, in fact, than under the eleemosynary system of the Voluntary schools.

But Sir Charles had brought back from his visits to America information drawn from "many of the best teachers," that "the parents who pay nothing care nothing;" and he feared the injurious effect of this indifference upon schools at home. "The payment of fees enlists the parents' interest, it promotes regularity of attendance, the parent who pays looking well after his purchase;

while it cherishes the inestimable virtues of self-respect and self-reliance." It may be doubted whether experience has shown that these desirable results always follow, as they ought to do; but he is on firmer ground, and touches the heart of the question, when he adds, "It must not be concealed from view that the abolition of fees would surely result in *the annihilation of Voluntary schools.* Now it was the distinct determination of the legislature that, in so far as these were efficient, they should be utilised, and not destroyed."

Thus it appears that opinions about the desirability of free education will be largely influenced by the estimate formed of the denominational schools. Those who regard them as "founded and maintained for the purpose of propagating the denominational creeds of the Churches with which they are connected,"—and who object to those creeds,—will naturally be found denying their claims on the public purse and desiring their extinction; but Charles Reed was disposed to ascribe more disinterested motives, and motives more distinctly educational, to their managers; and, while seeking firmly to check the abuse of their power for sectarian ends, he was for wishing them well in the great and good work he believed them to be doing.

But to return to the London Board and its Chairman. Whatever promised well for the happiness of the scholars had his thorough support. Whether it was the promotion of health by drill, swimming or the playground; whether it was the establishment of lending libraries, or the encouraging of the children to become depositors in savings banks, he was always ready to lend a helping hand. It may be mentioned, as an indication of the spirit in which he laboured, that late in life, and against the advice of many of his friends, he became a total abstainer, solely that he might aid in promoting habits of temperance among the thousands of teachers and children whom, as Chairman of the Board, he might be in a position to influence.

To the children in many of the schools he was as a personal friend, and nothing gratified him more than to receive the letters of simple thanks that often reached him. Let one stand as a specimen of many:—

"*To* SIR CHARLES REED.

"DEAR SIR,

"Having been at the opening of that noble school in Wolverly Street on Thursday evening,

and heard the Letter of thanks read from Frank F——, it is my wish to be the first Girl to send you a letter of thanks for what I am taught at Claremont Street school. I most heartly thank you for your kindness in giving your valueable services Concerning the poor Children of this country, may the Lord shower down his blessings down upon you and all belonging to you. I have been at Claremont Street school nearly Two years and during that time I have been to the crystal palace to receive a prize for scripture knowledge and a nice one it was too and I have received a prize for regular attendance called the standard bearer and I should not like to leave my school because the teachers are so kind to us I don't think I have anything more to say at the present time.

"I remain, your respectfully,

"A SCHOLAR."

Leaving for a moment the subject of education, we find Sir Charles engaged in 1877 in organizing the Caxton Celebration. An old printer himself, he was glad to see honour done to his great fellow-craftsman, and the more so since the profits of the Celebration were to go towards augmenting a fund for the widows of

those in the trade. He was Chairman of the Caxton Committee, and contributed to the loan exhibition a large number of old books and autographs. Following up his recently formed acquaintance with Longfellow, he wrote to request his co-operation. This was cordially given, the poet replying that "The man who died in the year this continent was discovered; who printed *Reynard the Fox* and the *Golden Legend* and the *Canterbury Tales;* who gave the world three books a year for twenty years in succession, deserves the grateful memory of all makers and readers of books."

In the following year Sir Charles was appointed to act for Great Britain as Judge in education at the Paris Exhibition. One of his letters home will give an idea of the way in which his time was employed.

"4th Floor,
"72, Avenue du Roi de Rome.

"Dearest A——,

"I have just an hour before going to the Prize Distribution. The sky looks clear and I am all ready, so I devote a little time to you and to dear M——, for whom this note is also intended.

"I arrived on Saturday, but owing to some

mistake was taken to the wrong rooms and had afterwards to be removed, much to the trouble of my landlady. I spent all the morning at the Exhibition, and at Mr. Owen's I saw the Prince and Princess of Wales. In the evening I dined with the representatives of the fourth estate at the Continental, and spoke. Next morning I went to the Salle Evangélique, which was quite crowded, and in the afternoon the Prince sent for me about a memorial to be presented on Tuesday.

"I am in uniform to-day, and shall have to take the Diploma of Honour awarded to the School Board. Paris is very full, the charges for carriages are exorbitant, and the horses worse than ever. We, the presidents, were to have been decorated to-day with the Legion of Honour; but I hear our Government objects, because no British subject may wear a foreign order without the Queen's permission.

"[A day later.] Last night I went with Mrs. E—— and Mr. and Mrs. C. C——, in a hired carriage, to the grand state reception at Versailles. Two hours going, one hour getting in, two hours in the heat and crush, one hour escaping and finding the carriage. Think of that! I reached my lodgings at three, and I

am at the Exhibition at nine, pressing on business, so that I may leave to-morrow."

When the School Board election of 1879 came round, he was physically unequal to the labours of a contest. He had recently lost his youngest son under painful circumstances, to be referred to in the next chapter; and a wet Sunday spent in visiting the *Shaftesbury*, "to see how the lads spend their Sundays," was the occasion of his taking a severe cold, which settled into a heavy cough. His physician forbade his being out after dark, and would not hear of his addressing public meetings; indeed, the winter months must be spent abroad. He was, however, allowed to remain in England till the election was over, and for several weeks he stayed at Brighton, coming up to town only for the meetings of the Board.

Thus he could bear no part in the fray; and the result was that the two experienced candidates with whom he had united in Hackney failed to secure seats, while he was returned second at the poll. Although the party of economical reaction had obtained a footing on the Board, no opposition was offered to his re-election to the Chair; and he was able to go with Lady

Reed and his two daughters to the South of France, knowing that his place would be ably filled by the Vice-Chairman, the Rev. John Rodgers.

On his return in the spring, his health appeared to be fully restored; and though now again a member of the House of Commons, he applied himself with zest to the work of the Board. He soon found, however, that a spirit of unreasoning obstruction had been introduced into its meetings to which he was an entire stranger; and though "he did not allow himself to be put out by disputes and delays," as one of his colleagues testified, his satisfaction and peace of mind were greatly marred.

After the summer recess, the difficulty thus caused seemed to have become greater instead of less; and this, taken with the death of two of his oldest friends on the Board, Mr. Rodgers and Mr. Watson, cast a shadow over the new session, which only grew darker as the months went on. The debates were longer than ever, and more acrimonious; meetings that usually occupied three hours were extended to seven or eight hours, and in one case had to be adjourned from late at night till the following morning. It was, on a smaller scale, the same strife that

was at the time attracting attention in Parliament. The writer well remembers witnessing the suspension of the thirty-five Home Rulers in the House of Commons one evening in February, 1881, and then walking down the Embankment to find the Board still engaged in debate, and an inexpressibly sad and weary look on the Chairman's face.

His friends felt that he could not long go on with harassing work like this, added to his Parliamentary and other duties, though they little suspected how few weeks would bring him release. He would tell his family that people must not talk any more about his being a good Chairman, for he could not get his ruling obeyed "even by the gentle sex." At the same time he was careful to keep the controversies of the Board room from interfering with the pleasant relations that existed between him and his colleagues. "Ah well," he would playfully say to one who had been a thorn in his side, "we know you're all right here," pointing to his heart; "though up here," touching his forehead, "you must admit you're not quite sound."

His last appearance at the Board was on the 10th of March; at the next two meetings Mr.

Edward N. Buxton, the new Vice-Chairman, took his place, and explained his absence as due to an indisposition which it was thought a few days would remove. None of the members was in the least prepared for the news of his death, which immediately followed.

At the first meeting after the funeral, many generous references were made to the loss which had been sustained, and which at first seemed irreparable. The Rev. J. Coxhead, a clerical colleague, said:

"Sir Charles' strict impartiality, readiness of speech, and knowledge of the forms of debate, his genial smile and kindly and gracious manner, were sometimes found separately in favoured individuals, but it was rare indeed to find them all combined in one man."

Dr. Gladstone, speaking from long friendship, said:

"We all know how the religious instruction in our schools had his hearty sympathy, for he once said 'The Bible is a revered book in our schools; if it were not so, I should never have put my hands to this work.'"

Those who had opposed the general policy of the Board, nevertheless "wished to express their admiration for his energy and disinterested labour, as well as for his fairness in presiding over the meetings"; and the Vice-Chairman, who now worthily fills his place, said:

"I think he will leave behind him here nothing but pleasant memories. His absolute fairness in the Chair and his great acuteness need no demonstration from me; and I believe not one of us, even of those who have been his colleagues for ten years, can remember a single occasion when there was even a hasty or harsh word from him. I think he was the most even-tempered man I knew, and most of us are able to treasure up acts of kindness and courtesy received from him."

As the result of a subscription among the members of the Board and a few other friends, a marble bust of the late Chairman has been executed by Mr. Onslow Ford, and is placed in a niche above the chair in the Board-room, the companion niche being occupied by a bust of his friend Mr. Rodgers.

CHAPTER XI.

BENT NOT BROKEN.

"Yet I argue not
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope, but still bear up and steer
Right onward."

To account for the effect upon Sir Charles of these multiplied public duties, it is necessary to lift the veil of his private life, and advert to troubles which had greatly impaired his strength.

The family circle remained unbroken until the summer of 1875, when his second daughter, Constance, succumbed, at the age of twenty, to an illness of long duration, brought on originally by an accident in the playground. A sound and vigorous constitution, a mind unwilling to take anything at second hand in its eager search after truth, and a character of singular power and sweetness, had given the prospect of long and

fruitful life, which was thus sadly blighted. The father's love had entwined itself closely around the sufferer; and when, as a last resource, the physicians recommended a visit to Switzerland, he arranged to accompany the party as soon as the School Board adjourned for the recess.

The extreme heat of the journey across France was unfavourable to the invalid; but on reaching Mürren she revived, and her father wrote home, "we cannot say that we are encouraged, but we rest in hope." The greatest kindness was shown by the visitors at the hotel, and not least by the late Archbishop of Canterbury and Mrs. Tait. But the vitalising air of the mountains could not refill the wasted springs of life and, though other places were tried, Constance grew weaker and longed for home. By sheer force of will and heroic endurance of pain, she accomplished the return journey, and reached Earlsmead for the last brief scene.

Her father now spent his evenings at home, reading aloud to her, and helping, by his cheerful manner, to sustain the sinking hopes of the family. The change came suddenly on the evening of Wednesday, the 22nd of September. The mother was the first to mark its approach; and her

apprehension spread from one to another as they dropped in, according to wont, and found her reading in a broken voice the descriptions from the old Book of the home above and the city of light. The conflict with pain lasted till the morning, when, as the grey light crept in, the weary heart ceased beating; and the father solemnly said to the watchers, "The spirit is returned to Him who gave it. Thank God for such a life and such a death."

It was characteristic that, on the day of his daughter's funeral, he went to see over a house about which one of his sons had to decide. When his future daughter-in-law expressed her surprise at his readiness to put aside his own grief and enter into the hopes of others, he replied: "When you know us better, you will learn that *all* the interests of our children lie very near to our hearts." Two of his sons were married in the early summer of the following year, while he was on his official visit to the Philadelphia Exhibition, and a couple of years later two more of "the boys" set up homes of their own; but as all four settled in the North of London, and spent part of every Saturday at Earlsmead, the old home circle was not contracted, but enlarged.

These family gatherings showed Sir Charles at his brightest. Amid a party rarely numbering, with visitors, fewer than eighteen he moved, the centre of animation and mirth, as willing to make up a set at bowls or tennis as he was to talk over the troubles of a young fellow in business, and give advice, which always turned out to be the very thing to be done. In charades and all kinds of "pencil games," where humour and ready invention were required, he was unrivalled. The *Earlsmead Chronicle*, which was "published" once a quarter, rarely appeared without an article from his pen; for even in his busiest public life he had no heart to refuse the appeals of the editor. An invariable feature of these Saturday gatherings was the singing of the hymn, "Safely through another week," in which all joined before rising from the tea table.

But the sorrow of his life was before him. In the summer of 1879, his youngest son Kenneth, a lad of high and unusual endowments, and the right hand of his parents, started from home on a canoe trip in Ireland. His companion was Mr. William J. Anderson of Holywood, near Belfast, with whom he had made a successful expedition the year before on Lough Neagh, the

Bann, and the English lakes. Both were strong and practised swimmers, and expert in the management of their boats, which were of the kind known as "sea-going" craft. Their plan on this occasion was to explore the whole course of the Shannon and the Blackwater, together with the connecting links of lake and sea. The season, however, was unpropitious; gales and floods prevailed; and when the young men had conveyed their boats to Clones and embarked on the waters of Upper Lough Erne, they were met by head winds that made progress most laborious, while in consequence of the overflow of the streams they repeatedly lost their way. Three days brought them to Enniskillen, whence Kenneth Reed wrote:—

"Thousands of acres are under water. Though we have the ordnance map, it is almost useless, as there is water, water everywhere. We camped the first night in an old ruined watch-tower, just large enough to swing our hammocks in. Away at nine the next morning, paddling in the teeth of the wind, getting under the lee of some of the numerous islands when possible, and staying to bale out after each reach of open water. Awfully hard, slow, and dispiriting work."

This letter reached London on Monday the 7th of July. The next day Sir Charles and Lady Reed were present at the laying of the foundation stone of the new wing of the Hospital for Incurables at Putney, when a hurricane nearly blew down a marquee on the lawn, and greatly alarmed many of the guests. Little did the parents dream that that wild blast had proved fatal to their boy and his brave companion.

On Thursday morning a telegram was received in London from the police at Dowra:—

"Two gentlemen, supposed names Kenneth Reed and Anderson, in boats *Gertrude* and *Maggie*, started down Lake Allen, Tuesday. The boats and sundries found on the lake shore yesterday. Gentlemen supposed to be drowned."

This news reached Sir Charles in a peculiarly distressing way. One of his sons, after searching for him in vain in the City, left a written message at the School Board offices. This letter was carried by him, on his arrival, unopened into a meeting of committee, the members of which had meantime heard the intelligence. He was taken aback at the looks of concern with which he was met; and on being pointed for explanation to the letter in his hand, the shock was overwhelming.

He hurried home, saying, as he crossed its threshold, "I had a presentiment of this;" and months afterwards he remarked, "When that news came, I felt myself stabbed at the heart, and the pain has never left me."

The stricken mother having already started for Ireland with her son Andrew, he followed by the night mail, overtaking them at Holyhead. "Ah! Maggie," he exclaimed, as he staggered into the cabin of the steamer, "this is the darkest day we have ever known." Hope, however, was not quite gone. It had been thought at first that the boats might have been blown ashore, while their owners were encamped on some island. But when it was learnt that the lake, which is about as large as Windermere, contained scarcely any islands, and that the hammocks and other gear had been found on board, this feeble prop of hope was struck away.

All this the travellers learnt before they reached the neighbourhood of Lough Allen; and on their arrival, the search parties had nothing to tell. The Saturday was spent, as a day has rarely to be spent by parents. No conveyance was to be hired in the little town of Carrick-on-Shannon; but a magistrate of the place, Mr. Cecil

Whyte, with the utmost kindness, offered them the use of his carriage. In this they drove round the lake, accompanied by their son and by Mr. T. M. Greer, their future son-in-law, seeking information, and posting up at intervals bills offering reward for the discovery of the bodies.

The succeeding days were passed, together with Mr. Anderson who had been bereft by this catastrophe of his only child, in fruitless search, and in the painful effort to sift the evidence which was only too freely volunteered by the peasants. Amid many discrepancies, all were agreed in describing the hurricane as one that could not have been anticipated, and as having lashed the lake to a fury no boat could have survived.

Day after day was passed by Sir Charles in a steam launch, scanning the surface of the water for precious remains which, in the caseof Kenneth Reed, have never been recovered. It was before this last poor hope was abandoned that the following letter to his daughter was written :—

"Imperial Hotel,
"Enniskillen, *July* 15.

"My dearest Agnes,

"I have read your most affectionate letter. Your tender heart, so truly devoted to our lost

boy, is touched, as ours are, with deepest grief. How changed our home will be, and what a loss we shall always and increasingly feel we have sustained! The end was sudden, but he was prepared, for I know he loved the Saviour.

"Every one we see speaks so well of him and of Willie; and the people here, where they spent their last Sunday, noted their quiet and reverent demeanour. We have followed all their course, and to-morrow I intend to take dearest mother to Lisnaskea, where they had to pack up their canoes and come on by train. This was a proof that dear Kenneth remembered his promise to me to avoid all risks, and we believe that on the fatal day he did not think the danger was so great as it was.

"The people call Allen 'a wicked lake.' Its waters rise with the wind, and the waves swell like a sea. Dear Andrew and Eliot stay by the shore; we have come to Enniskillen to get accommodation, and wait for tidings. [For, despite the extreme kindness of the clergyman and post-master at Dowra, they could not remain there.] I am sure it is best for dearest mother, though she frets much to be back again on the painful scene. A day or two more and our suspense will

have an end. [It was expected the bodies would float about the ninth day.] We shall telegraph to you at once to get all ready for our sad return. I will give all instructions at the cemetery [Abney Park], and we shall have a private funeral and lay our precious boy by the side of his sainted sister.

"Dearest Agnes, let this great trial bring us all nearer together, and let us 'follow on' till at length, one by one, we shall come to be for ever with the Lord."

These arrangements were not needed; the "sad return" was unaccompanied. A fortnight later the parents of Mr. Anderson had the melancholy satisfaction of laying the remains of their lost son in their family grave.

A friend who joined Sir Charles at Enniskillen says he could not have thought it possible for a parent to take the death of a son, to whom he was closely attached, with such submission: "it was simply wonderful; nothing could exceed my admiration." An indication of his healthy and generous spirit is given in the following letter, which he addressed, a year later, to each of his surviving children.

"HOUSE OF COMMONS,
"*July* 8, 1880.

"DEAR——,

"This is a sad anniversary; but I am anxious to connect the memory of our dear lost boy with bright recollections, and not with those of gloom.

"At this time of the year, and in memory of him, I shall remit to each of his brothers and sisters a sum of ten pounds, to be applied to prolonging and making happier their summer holiday. . . .

"I inclose the amount named for 1880, and am

"Your affectionate father,

"CHARLES REED."

A few days spent at Evolena, in August 1879, could do little towards repairing the effects of this sorrowful time; and he was little fit for the duty of writing his annual statement of the work of the School Board, and still less for the approaching election, and the contest it was sure to involve.

In this election, as has already been stated, he was unable to take any personal part; and on its conclusion he started, under medical orders, for Cannes, accompanied by his wife and daughters.

Here he gained almost immediate benefit. The season admitted of his living in the open

air, and the hotel afforded congenial society, which his sunny presence made still more agreeable. An amusing testimony to this was given one day by the proprietor, in answer to a demand made by his guest for better rooms. He protested his anxiety to oblige, and added:

"You do great good to my house—you take such notice of those who are not of high family; it does so unite the house. I say you are like a bridge, bringing all the people together." "That may be," replied Sir Charles, "but then you must please remember that we are not a bridge to be walked over and trodden on." The host's eyes twinkled as he rejoined, "Yes, but ever since you came you have made way for everybody."

During this visit he was in correspondence about the borough of St. Ives, in Cornwall, for which he had agreed to stand at the next General Election.

"As to Parliament," he writes to a member of his family, "you know why I gave it up. As I took that step in 1874 to serve the cause of education, so now my main desire in re-entering it is to advance the cause for which *outside* the House

of Commons I have worked for six years, giving exactly half my week days to the service, and I might almost say my whole soul and spirit." His friends had sought to dissuade him from this purpose as involving far too severe a strain; and after the death of his son it was hoped that he might see his way clear to relinquish the idea. But he felt it at once difficult to withdraw from his promise, and of importance that the School Board should, like other public bodies, be directly represented in Parliament by its Chairman.

The news of the dissolution of March, 1880, reached him in Rome. He instantly returned with Lady Reed to London; and within a couple of hours of his arrival was off to Cornwall, that he might be in time to have a meeting on the Saturday with the fishermen. In Mr. Ross, the Conservative candidate, he found a formidable rival possessed of local influence; while his own connexion with the London School Board was taken by many of the electors as quite enough to render him responsible for the erection of a new Board school in the town, which had caused considerable offence. However, his health and spirits were not to be easily depressed; the canvassing expeditions through the outlying

townships gave him outdoor exercise that he enjoyed; and his energy and winning address soon produced their effect.

"That I have worked hard there is no doubt, and I am more surprised and thankful than I can tell, because I doubted so greatly my own strength. Cannes has certainly given me resisting power; yet I shall not presume. The people here are sanguine, but I hold my peace."

A gentleman who had held office under a former Government, and who was staying at the time in the same hotel with Sir Charles, says, "It was very pleasant, in the midst of the passions of the hour, to witness the perfect way in which he conducted his election, bringing to bear upon it the principles of a Christian gentleman."

The polling at St. Ives was probably affected by the example of larger constituencies where the elections were held first. By the time the Cornish borough was called on to return its member, the Liberal tide was flowing fast. Still the contest was a close one; and it was not till after an exciting day, when ninety-two per cent. of the available voters had been brought up, that Sir Charles was found to have won, by 487 votes

against 439 recorded in favour of Mr. Ross. The latter paid a generous tribute of praise to the victor, who in turn expressed a hope that they might soon meet in Parliament. This was not to be; but barely a year passed, before Mr. Ross was elected to the seat he then failed to secure.

During the summer of that year Sir Charles went with his wife to Ireland to see the new home of their daughter Margaret, who had just been married to Mr. Greer. Thence they proceeded to Lough Allen, to revisit the scene of the accident, and to look at a memorial tablet they had had placed in the little church at Dowra. It was on this journey that the *Statement of Ten Years' Work of the London School Board*, given in the Appendix, was prepared.

The harassing nature of the work which awaited him on his return to London has been sufficiently referred to in the last chapter. Bereft of some who had been brothers rather than colleagues, and exposed to long sittings both in the House of Commons and at the School Board, owing to determined and vexatious obstruction, he was unable to secure the needful amount of rest, albeit he had taken rooms close to St. Stephen's

where he had the comfort of the company of his wife and daughter.

They, however, were as far as any from imagining how nearly his course of public service was run. On Tuesday, the 8th March, 1881, he attended, according to custom, the annual festival of the Reedham Asylum, one of his father's institutions. Two days later he went into Warwickshire to help one of his friends on the School Board who was standing for Parliament. Whether he overstrained himself in addressing the crowded meeting, or took a chill on leaving, is not known.

The Sunday following he attended divine service at Clapton Park, where his relative, the Rev. Eustace Conder, of Leeds, was preaching, and set out to walk back to Tottenham, as was his usual practice. Before he had gone half a mile, he was seized with intense pain in the chest, which obliged him to drive home and send for Dr. May, his medical adviser. The opinion given was of a nature to alarm the family; and he himself evidently felt the attack to be serious, for it was found afterwards that he had written some testamentary instructions before sending for the doctor.

The next day he was better, and a consulta-

tion with Dr. Andrew Clark tended to allay fear, it being considered that the attack was chiefly pleuritic, that it had been checked in good time, and that the patient showed great vital strength.

From that time his improvement was rapid, and in a few days the pleurisy was declared to be virtually at an end, though great care was urged during the stage of convalescence. The week that followed was not only peaceful but bright. He evidently enjoyed the quiet home-nursing of his wife and daughter, who rejoiced to have him with them on almost any terms. The invalid room was made cheerful by his pleasant sallies of humour, and by his grateful reception of all that was done for him.

His active mind soon began to enter into all that was going on in political and social life, and he dictated answers to a great number of letters, making plans and fixing dates with his usual precision. Such was his facility in despatching business, that not until this illness did even his wife understand the endless claims made upon his time, sympathy, and good offices, in every department of friendship and public interest.

On Wednesday, the 23rd March, he sat up for several hours, chatting with his sister, Mrs. Spalding, who had come from Hastings to see him, and to whom he was tenderly attached. So much better did he feel, that he took his doctor playfully to task for not letting him go to the House to join in a vote of confidence in the Government.

The next day he was even stronger, and for some time walked about his room. His elder brother came to see him and stay the night. He much enjoyed their intercourse, and begged him in the evening to conduct family worship in his room. The hundred and third Psalm was read, and the whole tone was that of thankfulness for renewed strength.

Yet that night the summons came. About one o'clock the faintness which had introduced his illness returned, but this time without suffering. His son Andrew, who happened to be sleeping in the house, quickly brought Dr. May, who, after examining his patient, expressed the hope that he might overcome this attack as he had former ones. Sir Charles held a few minutes' conversation with his wife, dictating with perfect clearness the conclusion of the instructions partly

written by himself. He then spoke of his entire though humble trust in the Saviour, and his readiness to lay down all the interests and work of life at his Master's call. When the doctor kindly said he must not trouble himself with worldly cares, he replied, "I have no worldly cares at all." After an hour spent in full consciousness, he fell into a quiet sleep. About half-past four his wife was startled from her sofa by a sudden cry of "Maggie, Maggie!" and almost in the utterance of the name that had been music to him for more than forty years, and before any one else could reach the room, a change came over his face, and in less than five minutes he had passed away.

The news of his death caused grief to many beyond his immediate circle; he had fallen at the early age of sixty-one, when it was hoped he might hold his place among the workers for many a year. Arrangements were made for a private funeral, such as it was known he would have chosen; but the numerous expressions of public sympathy made it impossible fully to carry out this intention. The Board schools throughout London were closed for the day, the members of the Board attended in a body, and deputations

were present from all, or nearly all, the societies with which he had been connected.

Thus on Wednesday, the 30th March, Abney Chapel was filled with a gathering remarkable for its varied and representative character. Lord Sandon and Mr. W. H. Smith were there —both members of the late Government, and colleagues of Sir Charles on the first School Board; Mr. Mundella, the Vice-President of the Council; Mr. Holms and Professor Fawcett, the members for Hackney; with many others, differing in political and religious creed, who had been joined with him in the work of life, and were now united in paying to his memory their tribute of respect.

The service, which was of the simplest, was conducted by the Rev. Professor McAll, acting pastor of Clapton Park Church (in the absence of the Rev. S. Hebditch), and the Rev. Dr. Allon, Chairman of the Congregational Union of England and Wales; the address, delivered by the Rev. Eustace Conder, was admirable alike for its delicate appreciation of character and its freedom from excessive eulogy.

In the cemetery itself the concourse of people was unexampled, and it was with difficulty the

procession could pass to the grave. Here the concluding part of the service was wisely made very brief by Dr. Allon and the Rev. Joshua Harrison, the officiating ministers. Many wreaths were laid upon the coffin by relatives and friends, and one had been sent from St. Ives; but none was more welcome and appropriate than that which was brought from a neighbouring Board school by some of the children he had loved and served.

Here therefore—as one has written who knew him well—

"In the thronged stillness of the burial-place
Near to his dead we lay him, and the feet
Of myriad mourners silently retreat
From the last shroud of that beloved face;
Poor hands and hard find costly flowers to grace
The grave of him whose toiling days were sweet
With kindly love, that crowned and made complete
The life-long labour for his land and race.
We do not praise him, for his deeds shall praise;
Nor grieve we greatly, knowing that the King
Has called him unto higher ministering,
Among the souls that strive in unseen ways
To help the generations, as they climb
The sunward slopes and terraces of time."

APPENDIX.

TEN YEARS' WORK

OF THE

LONDON SCHOOL BOARD.

APPENDIX.

SCHOOL BOARD FOR LONDON.

STATEMENT made by SIR CHARLES REED, M.P., Chairman, on the reassembling of the Board, 30th September, 1880.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

No work can be fairly judged in its commencement. Hence, to those who were eager for results in the very spring-time of our operations, we said, "Wait until our work is fairly established, and has had time to tell; give us ten years, and then we shall have made a mark on the Metropolis and be able to render a good account of what has been expended." The School Board for London was constituted in the autumn of 1870, so that the ten years have now elapsed; and the completion of the decade—the first decade of its history—affords a suitable opportunity, not only for a review of the past year, but for a comparison between the state of Elementary Education in the

First decade of Board's History.

Metropolis now, and its condition at the time of the passing of the Elementary Education Act.

Nature of Work.

The business of the Board is twofold. It has on the one hand to discuss great questions of principle and method, with a view to attain more effectually the grand end it has set before it; while on the other it has to work the existing machinery, supply lack of accommodation, secure and keep up the attendance of children, mainly of the roughest class, and provide for their instruction. The former part—the theoretic—is of great importance; but the latter, which is the practical part, is that in which, after all, the public take keenest interest. They have a right to be satisfied that we spare no pains to arrive at the best way of doing the work; but they would justly complain if we were to arrest the teaching of the children until our methods were perfect; and they are chiefly desirous to know the results actually attained. It is for this purpose mainly that the Board confides in the discretion of its Chairman to present annually a brief statement of its work.

Opinion of one of H.M. Inspectors.

It is not for me to speak in praise of those results; but it is a satisfaction to quote the opinion of one of the most experienced of Her Majesty's Inspectors who, in his report of Schools examined by him in the Southwark district, says:—"I would again express in general terms a high appreciation of the Board's work, its vast extent and rapid spread, its considerable success and immense superiority to earlier efforts on behalf of popular education."

That the work of the Board which I am about to describe may be rightly appreciated, it is necessary to recall the requirements of the Metropolitan area. The population of the elementary school class, between the ages of three and thirteen, is at present, according to the basis adopted in the office of the Registrar-General, 740,577, besides 65,640 children between the ages of thirteen and fourteen, many of whom may be compelled to attend school under Lord Sandon's Act of 1876. The schedules sent in by the Visitors of the Board last Easter, give the number as somewhat less.

Requirements of Metropolitan area. Population of Elementary School class.

Looking now to the Accommodation for scholars of the elementary class, it is not possible to take an earlier starting-point for comparison than the close of the year 1871, when the Voluntary Schools had furnished their returns, and our own work had just begun. There was at that time accommodation in all for 262,259 children, or 39·4 per cent. of the estimated population of school age. At Midsummer last the Denominational Schools had provision for 269,469 children, or 8,000 more than in 1871, while we had provided for 225,236, giving a total accommodation for 494,705 out of a present child population of 740,577, or 66·8 per cent. Thus we have now seats for two out of every three children needing elementary education.

School Accommodation in 1871 *and* 1880.

If we confine our view to the past year, it is seen that the accommodation afforded by the Denominational Schools has declined 2,884 places, while ours has increased by 15,008. This latter increase has involved the acceptance of tenders for 24 new

Schools, accommodating 21,751 children. These Schools are planned upon our usual scale, smaller Schools being proportionately more expensive.*

Average Cost of Board Schools.

The average cost per head on the tenders of these twenty-four Schools last built has been 8*l.* 18*s.* 5*d.*, which includes the provision of teachers' rooms, school-keepers' houses, boundary walls, and in several cases extra deep foundations. The buildings, while free from display, are designed to be durable, attractive, and well equipped for their purpose. The Board has now acquired by purchase freehold sites, giving a total area of over 151 acres, henceforth the property of the rate-payers of the Metropolis. In each case the Department has sanctioned both the site selected and the building proposed to be erected upon it. Wherever it has been desired, our Schools have been opened publicly, and it has been the practice on these occasions to present a statement showing the need for the School. The attendance of the parents at these opening ceremonies has always been such as to prove the great interest taken in our work; and our action has been justified by the readiness with which the children have flocked in as soon as the doors were opened, and the full attendance effected without permanent injury to existing Schools in the neighbourhood.

Freehold Property of Ratepayers.

[1] Of 216 new permanent Schools of the Board, 55 are planned to accommodate under 750 children, 77 to hold under 1,000 children, 78 to hold under 1,500, and 6 to hold upwards of 1,500.

On the School Roll I need not dwell; a glance at the subjoined table will show that we have several thousands of children more upon our rolls than we could accommodate, were all to attend at one time; whereas the Voluntary Schools have a roll considerably below their accommodation. A surer test of effective working is found in the average daily attendance. This has risen in the Voluntary Schools from 173,406 at the end of 1871 to 180,706 at Midsummer last, at which latter date our Schools showed a daily average of 192,995; so that now, with accommodation for 44,000 children fewer than the Voluntary Schools, we have an attendance of 12,000 more. The last year has diminished their attendance by 793, while ours has been augmented by 19,192.[1]

[1] The above details may be more clearly shown in tabular form, thus :—

	Christmas, 1871.	Christmas, 1876.	Midsummer, 1879.	Midsummer, 1880.
Population of School age	664,723	709,715	733,446	740,577
Accommodation in Voluntary Schools ...	261,158	287,116	272,353	269,469
,, Board Schools	1,101	146,074	210,228	225,236
Total	262,259	433,190	482,581	494,705
Average No. on Roll of Voluntary Schools ...	221,401	259,436	232,874	231,578
,, Board Schools	1,117	146,031	215,779	238,660
Total	222,518	405,467	448,653	470,238
Average attendance in Voluntary Schools ...	173,406	199,605	181,499	180,706
,, Board Schools.. ...	895	114,380	173,803	192,995
Total	174,301	313,985	355,302	373,701

This shows an increase for the 8½ years of 88·6 in Accommodation, 121·5 in the School Roll, and 114·3 in Attendance.

Compulsory Attendance—Opinion of Rt. Hon. W. E. Forster.

This average daily attendance, in the efficient elementary schools of London, of 373,701 children as compared with the 174,301 at the end of 1871, has been attained through the exercise of our compulsory powers. So early as 1873 Mr. Forster, then Vice-President of the Privy Council, bore this testimony:—"We gave you a great work, and when we gave you the power we did not think that you could accomplish one part especially, I mean the work of the compulsory powers. I thought Manchester and Liverpool might, but it was a most unexpected satisfaction to me when the London School Board did it, and I think that much of the success which has attended the putting that law in effect is due to the wisdom and moderation with which you have put it in force." [*Times*, 22*nd November*, 1873.] And the present Vice-President has recently said that it was owing to the discretion with which the various School Boards and local authorities had carried the bye-laws into effect that "so large a measure of success had been attained, because, had the system been carried out rigidly and harshly, it must have infallibly broken down." It is due to the Divisional Committees of the Board to acknowledge the patience and leniency which they have shown in the application of these powers. Now that parents have come to understand that their children must go to school, and that public opinion supports the law, the task of our visitors will be easier, and the cost may in time be considerably reduced. Our present staff

consists of 223 visitors, under 11 superintendents and 20 assistants. In the half-year ended at Midsummer, the preliminary notice to parents was issued in 36,852 cases, with the result of attendance being given or improved in 26,193 cases. For the same half-year summonses were taken out in the case of 3,012 children: the order to attend school being in all cases complied with, or a small fine imposed.

New Act extending Compulsory Powers for England and Wales.

There can be little doubt that it is owing in a large degree to the success of compulsion in London, that the Government has felt encouraged to apply it to the whole population of England and Wales. We shall be gainers by this extension. There are numbers of idle children about the streets of the Metropolis, who come in day by day from the outer suburbs, where their parents have gone to live, so as to be beyond the reach of a School Board; and, in the eyes of many, we get the discredit of having failed to do our duty by these children. The new Act will inclose these in parishes like Tottenham which, with a School population of at least 5,000, has only just elected a School Board, and Edmonton which, with nearly as many, has a Board only now forming.

Improvement in Average Attendance.

Although the average daily attendance in our Schools has greatly improved, being 74·9 on the average number on the roll at Midsummer 1875, and 80·8 at Midsummer in the current year, we do not profess to be

satisfied with it; and it must be our constant endeavour to raise the percentage.[1]

The "right classes" of Children in Board Schools.

We are frequently asked how far we have "the right class" of children, it being implied that Board Schools were devised solely for what are commonly, and very improperly, called gutter children. The truth of the matter is that our Schools were intended to supply a deficiency of accommodation, the parents being left as sole judges of the Schools suitable for their children. So long as there remains a notable lack of secondary Schools, and parents find in the Board Schools better teaching than they can secure elsewhere, no one can dispute their right to apply on behalf of their children for vacant seats in our Schools. But while we cannot refuse the child of a well-to-do tradesman, nor even of Her Majesty's Inspector himself, if he seeks admission for it, it is certain that we do secure the attendance of the very poor. Let any one visit our Schools in the lower neighbourhoods, and he can put this assertion to the test. Mr. Stokes says of his district, "Some of the

[1] Table showing the improvement in the attendance of children at Board Schools in March 1873–4 and March 1879–80 :—

	Number on the Roll.	Average Attendance.	Percentage of Absentees.
March, 1873	35,766	22,145	38·0
,, 1874	67,576	47,346	29·9
,, 1879	209,337	168,167	19·5
,, 1880	232,726	186,813	19 7

Board Schools are attended by children as poor and neglected as can anywhere be found; while other Board Schools, though less wretched, undertake their full share of hard, rough work." The very children, who were dirty and ill-conditioned, are now clean and better dressed, the result not of improved means on the part of the parents, but of a readiness to make sacrifices for the sake of the young. There is a general testimony that "the Schools have lifted up the population."

School Fees.

To do our duty by such children, and yet considerably to raise the fees is impossible. There are, no doubt, many children under our care whose parents could afford 4*d.*, 6*d.*, or 9*d.* a-week; and we would willingly charge it if it were possible to have different rates of payment in the same School, or to provide separate Schools for the upper working class and the lower. But it not being possible to introduce these social distinctions, we are obliged to fix the fee in each School at the average ability of the parents. As the Vice-President of the Council said last month, "In London and in large towns it was absolutely necessary that there should be low-feed Schools, owing to the impossibility of making full inquiry into the circumstances of the parents of every child." As far back as March, 1879, the Board requested the Divisional Members in each division of the Metropolis to make a report on this subject of fees. The returns have been submitted to members of the present Board for consideration, and a report may shortly be expected

from the School Management Committee. At present we have—

School places at...	1d.	2d.	3d.	4d.	6d.
	49,246	109,903	49,887	10,284	3,807

giving a total of 223,127, at an average fee of 2·16*d.*

At the present time the fees of 4,785 children (or less than $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.) are being remitted by the Board. This is exclusive of cases where they are paid by the Guardians. As a matter of reward, certain fees are paid by the Department for children who earn Honour Certificates for proficiency and regular attendance. Of these, the Schools of the Board received 318 for the half-year ending September, 1879, and 560 for that ended in March last.

Punctuality—a weak point.

Even when allowing for the class of children with which we have to deal, punctuality is a weak point in many of our Schools; and this is the more to be regretted as it interferes with the Scripture Instruction which is everywhere given at the beginning of the morning session. One of our Inspectors reports that "in very many Schools not half the children are present when the Bible Lesson begins, in some not a fourth," and adds, "No feature in our School work presents to my mind such an unsatisfactory appearance as this unpunctuality." The

Board naturally casts the responsibility upon the Teachers; but the task is a very difficult one for them, unless they are supported by the hearty co-operation of the parents.

Examination in Scripture Lessons.

Notwithstanding the admitted defect just referred to, the interest taken by the large bulk of our children in the daily Scripture Lesson is undiminished. The voluntary Examination for the prizes given by Mr. Peek and the Religious Tract Society attracted this year 127,501 children, as compared with 112,979 in 1879. The Examiner says:—"As the above total nearly corresponds to the ordinary daily attendance, and as the attendance at this examination is perfectly optional, we have a striking proof that, with scarcely any exception, the parents of the children who attend our Schools do not object to the religious instruction which is there given, and I am convinced that a great many of them highly value it." From the children in Standards IV., V., and VI., who were examined, the teachers selected about 6,000 to compete, in a written examination, for prizes and certificates; but no fewer than 112 boys' departments, and 107 girls' departments failed to gain a single prize, a failure which can be attributed only to lack of earnestness on the part of teachers.

The Three Fundamental Subjects.

In the three fundamental subjects our Schools have done well; for the year ended March 25th last, their percentages of passes were about the same as in the previous year, despite the raising of the Standard

Examination, and considerably above those of elementary Schools generally, thus :—

Percentage of Passes in	Schools in England and Wales.	London Board Schools.
Reading...	87·53	88·96
Writing	80·08	86·3
Arithmetic	73·87	81·99

Average of Passes.

Taking our average of passes at 85·75, I find we still head the list, Board Schools generally coming next with 82·31, Roman Catholic Schools 81·62, next British Schools 81·53, Wesleyan Schools 81·5, and National Schools 79·27. The Registrar-General says : — "Looking at the spread of Elementary Education as evidenced by the constantly decreasing number of men and women failing to write their names in the marriage register, the country is to be congratulated on the success attending its efforts in this direction, which doubtless will be shown in a more striking manner when the children now receiving education at Board and other Schools become men and women."[1]

Education not too advanced for Elementary Schools.

That Education does not soar too high with us is, however, shown by the fact that, taking the 119 departments inspected in March, April and May last, 24·1 of the children were in the first Standard, 26·5 in the second, and 22·4 in the third, the limit of which is to

[1] During the years 1841–5 the percentage in London of men who signed the marriage register with marks was 11·8, and of women, 24 ; for the five years 1874–8 the numbers were 8 and 12 respectively.

read a short paragraph, write a sentence from dictation, and do sums in long division and compound addition. This leaves only 26·8 of the scholars for the upper Standards, and justifies one of our Inspectors in saying that "the charge of over-instructing is wholly groundless; only 16·5 of the children receive instruction in Specific Subjects, the remainder, 83·5, being taught merely the 3 R's, and in the case of those above Standard I. a few simple facts relating to Geography and Grammar."

Specific Subject

These Specific Subjects come in when children have reached the Fourth Standard; but there is ample evidence to show that their value depends on the way in which they are taught. Literature, as it is called, is the favourite subject, and one of great value as giving children a wider command of language. But it may be taught as "a purely mechanical exercise of memory which has no educational value." The boy, says Mr. Stewart, who defined the labouring swain as "the farm pig what toils about," is no exception; and the same barren results appear in many of the answers on Domestic Economy and Cookery. He sums up some strictures, on the justice of which it is not for me to pass any opinion, by saying, "I do not think that Schools are now as successful as they once were in giving children that real education which is never wholly lost; and if I may trust to the lessons, learned by my own experience, their inferiority is due to (1) the neglect of the art of teaching, (2) the conversion of Standards of examination into Standards of organisa-

tion, and (3) the ambitious multiplying of subjects which teachers put in their time-tables;" and he refers to the dread of low percentages of passes and diminished grants as causes which keep many from pursuing the more solid, if less showy, paths of work. In cases, however, where the Reading is intelligent, the inclusion of the Specific Subjects in the upper Standards is of the greatest value, not only for the information imparted, which bears upon the most practical side of the children's future life, but for the help and relish they lend to the fundamental subjects. Lord Norton's motion for limiting the teaching in Public Elementary Schools to the latter, would, if adopted, defeat its own object by the monotony introduced into the Schools of the people. The exemption of Switzerland from rinderpest has been ascribed on good authority to the rich variety of food which the cattle find on the Alpine pastures; and the same holds good in education. Evidence was given in a recent debate in Parliament that Elementary Science was a subject full of interest for the young, while the Vice-President adduced instances to prove that the introduction of Class Subjects at once led to a brighter and more successful teaching of the fundamental subjects.

Cookery Classes.

The Cookery Scheme adopted by the Board is being gradually brought into operation with satisfactory results. The parents of the girls greatly appreciate this branch of the work, and the lessons given in the kitchens are in many cases repeated in the home.

Needlework.

We have recently memorialised the Department on the subject of the increasing stringency of the Needlework requirements of the Code. Our Examiner visits nearly 140 departments each quarter; she reports that an undue fear of the Government Inspector's visit causes a good deal of hasty and uneven work, but that the general progress is good, and presents a marked contrast with "the dark ages of Needlework."

Drill in Schools.

The report from Colonel Battersby, on the last inspection of boys in Drill, should be sufficient to meet the objections of those who imagine we are training up a nation of young warriors. The Code distinctly prescribes "military drill"; but when it is understood that this means chiefly extension motions and orderly marching, and that the boys are not armed even with sticks, the fear of a martial spirit being fostered may be dismissed. "I do not hesitate to say," says the Inspector, "that the best drilled School will be the most easily managed, and that more instruction will be imparted in a given time, and with less expenditure of the master's power, where he has been able to enforce a prompt and accurate compliance with his orders on the drill ground." Since December, 1878, special efforts have been made to promote the physical improvement of our girls, and the services of an experienced Swedish Teacher have been engaged for the purpose.

Swimming is a subject to the importance of which the Members of the Board are fully alive, though it is

beyond their province to make direct provision for it at the cost of the ratepayers. We are, however, glad to observe that about 2,000 children annually have availed themselves of the facilities offered by the London Schools Swimming Club, to which many of us individually subscribe. "The Bath proprietors throughout London have readily assisted the Club, and the First Commissioner of Works allows it to use the Victoria Park swimming lake on Saturday mornings, when any one who visits the lake will enjoy a novel and pleasing sight not easily to be forgotten." In this department, the late Miss Chessar greatly assisted us; and the loss of her encouragement will be keenly felt.

Swimming.

The Singing Instructor reports that his classes for Pupil Teachers were joined last September by 1,720; he has held also nine classes for Head and Assistant Teachers, at which 300 have been in regular attendance.

Singing.

The Kindergarten Instructor has continued to visit certain Schools. For six years classes have been held for the teachers of Infants, where "any Teacher, who wishes to make these exercises useful to her little scholars, is able to get the information she wants."

Kindergarten Instruction.

It is largely due to this educational agency that the Infant Schools of the Board have attained their high superiority. The parents show great readiness in sparing their little ones, and we have many excellent teachers who devote themselves to making the

Schools as happy and attractive as possible. In looking over the reports of our Inspectors, I have been struck to find almost unbroken praise of the Infant departments. Reports like the following are of constant occurrence: — "Mrs. T. conducts this School with great kindness, earnestness and ability; the children are bright and cheerful, and have passed a good examination."

The Library Scheme.

The Library scheme of the Board, by which select Libraries are established in connexion with every permanent School, has proved a complete success, the children highly appreciating the privilege of borrowing books for perusal in their homes, into which, very often, pure and wholesome literature has never before found an entrance. The Libraries being found too small, the Board has enlarged them from £10 to £12 in value; the books are passed on every six months from School to School, so as to supply a frequent change of reading.

Rewards and Scholarships.

The rewards we have it in our power to offer are not numerous. At present about one in four of our Scholars obtains a certificate or book for regular attendance; and we have, through the generosity of various London Companies and individuals, a small number of Scholarships at our disposal. During the current year we have received two new Scholarships from Mrs. Charles Buxton and Mr. Sydney C. Buxton, one from the Clothworkers' Company, five from the Drapers' Company, and one from Mr. A. G. Crowder. These, with two other Scholarships, which are renewals, have been taken

by eight boys, the sons respectively of a French-polisher, a shoe manufacturer, a commercial traveller, a schoolmaster, an engine-fitter, a manager and a plumber; and by three girls, daughters of a mariner, a gilder, and a builder. The Head Master of the City of London School, where several of our pupils are holding their Scholarships, reports that they have done extremely well, but that a little special tuition is needed in order to bridge the interval between the Board School and the middle-class public School.

Educational Endowments.

It has long been our contention that large funds originally intended for purposes of education were being diverted into other channels; and we cannot, therefore, but feel gratified at the impression produced by the Board's report on the City Parochial Charities of London. Since I last addressed you, we have presented a petition to Parliament, praying that, in the event of proposals for a re-appropriation of City trusts being entertained, it will make such enactment as may tend to the advancement of education under our direction, acting for the Metropolis. A petition from the Board in reference to St. Katharine's Hospital has also been laid before Parliament. It is the custom of the Charity Commissioners to forward to us the schemes drawn up by them for the future administration of metropolitan endowments, and to invite us to express our opinion, with the provision, in many cases, that we shall nominate members of the governing bodies. The latest instance of this is in connexion with Christ's Hospital, which provides

that the School Board for London shall appoint four Governors. The scheme also contemplates the establishment of sixty Scholarships, to be competed for by children who have attended public Elementary Schools in the Metropolis;[1] and it is not too much to expect that in other cases a like course may be adopted.

Special Departments of Board work—Half-time Schools.

The special departments of our work remain to be noticed. Our Half-time Schools are in good order, the average attendance at that in Bethnal Green being 88·8 of the average number on the roll. At the other, situated in the Tower Hamlets, it has been deemed advisable to admit whole-time children as well as half-timers, and the attendance has increased threefold.

Blind.

Of the Blind nearly 100 are now under instruction, brought by their parents into twenty-five of our Schools. The Superintendent believes that at least as many are not yet gathered in, and he points out that there is a class of children who are only partially blind, whose attendance is

[1] Article 102 of the Draft Scheme is as follows :—

"Sixty places shall be allotted to be competed for by boys not being over 13 years of age at the time of competition, and having been educated for at least three years immediately preceding such competition in public Elementary Schools in the Metropolis, as defined by the Elementary Education Act, 1870, or any statutory modification thereof in force for the time being, and having passed the Sixth Standard of the Code of Minutes of the Education Department in force for the time being, and being recommended as fit Candidates by the Managers of the Schools last attended by them respectively."

extremely difficult to secure. "Season after season the Visitors are met by the excuse that their eyes are too bad just now, but that next quarter or next year they may be sent. . . . Meanwhile the children reach fourteen years of age, having lost advantages which were specially needed by those who miss much of the sympathy extended to the wholly blind."

Deaf and Dumb.

For the Deaf and Dumb we are still making experiments in the oral and manual systems. Young children are placed at first in the oral division, where they are taught to acquire articulate sounds, and then to combine these into syllables and words. But where lip-reading fails to be an adequate means of communication, the manual alphabet is resorted to. The attendance for the quarter ended at Lady Day last was ninety-seven, out of 162 on the books. The attendance at the centres where instruction is given has been more than doubled by the voluntary establishment of Homes where the children who come from a distance can reside during the week.

Industrial Schools.

In carrying out the provisions of the Industrial Schools Act, the Officers of the Board had, up to Midsummer last, reported on 11,309 cases of destitute children not chargeable with crime. Of these 6,001 have been withdrawn from the streets, and distributed among fifty-two Industrial Schools throughout the country, with which the Board has temporary arrangements, or sent to our own schools at Brentwood and Grays.

At Midsummer last we had 3,289 children of this class under our care.

Board Industrial School, Brentwood.

The School at Brentwood is certified for 100 boys, and is conducted on the half-time system, the boys receiving instruction and industrial training alternately. Her Majesty's Assistant Inspector, on his last visit, reported that the education was "very well attended to," and that all the classes were "carefully instructed by competent and painstaking teachers."

Every effort is made, when the boys leave, to place them in suitable employments. The Inspector says, however, that the establishment in London of a Boys' Working Home would greatly facilitate the discharge of the boys, and keep them under control until they were ready to earn their own living.

Board's Training-ship, "Shaftesbury."

The same half-time system is adopted on board the *Shaftesbury* Training Ship, which is certified at present to receive 350 boys; these are selected after medical examination. Those who leave for service at sea are provided with a suitable kit. The inspector, who last July visited the ship and its tender the *Swift* reports as follows:—"The boys look particularly healthy and bright. The ship has made excellent progress in all respects. Her present condition of fitness and efficiency places her in the front rank of our training ships of this class and character."

The object of our Truant School, as is well known, is the exercise for a brief space of wise and firm rule over stubborn boys, "the irrepressible bad boys,"

Board's Truant School.

lately referred to in the *Times*, who have successfully defied the authority of parents and friends by habitually absenting themselves from School. Up to Midsummer last, 213 refractory lads had been received with the consent of their parents. As a rule, upon promise of obedience, they are licensed out after an average absence from home of twelve weeks. It is most satisfactory to note that these boys, after going out, have made eighty-two school attendances out of 100, proving that the timely intervention of the Board has secured the object contemplated.

Juvenile Crime.

The Prison Returns continue to show that juvenile crime is being diminished, scarcely any convictions being reported of children under thirteen years of age. When this fact is set against the statistics recently published of crime in the Metropolis fifteen years ago, it affords proof that the action of the Board has largely contributed to check juvenile delinquency. At the same time the reformatory returns show that the ranks of juvenile depredators are continually reinforced by importations of bad boys, who drift into the Metropolis from the lowest agricultural class; and their tendency is to "accumulate in masses."

Principle and Method—Code.

To turn now to the subjects affecting principle and method, which have been prominent in our debates during the past year, I may notice first the Code by which our work is regulated. It is known that there have been two Codes presented to Parliament this year, which may be called

the Richmond and Spencer Codes respectively. The former contained some changes of so grave a nature that the Board drew up a memorial, showing the evils that, in its opinion, would arise if they were carried into effect. In consequence of this and other representations, they were dropped by the Government, which came into power in the spring, on the ground that time was required for considering the whole question.

Centre Teaching.

Immediately on the accession of the present Government, we renewed our request that the system called Centre Teaching might be sanctioned. The object of this plan is to give pupil teachers, grouped in districts, the advantage of united instruction from skilled teachers, not of their own, but of any school. The readiness of their Lordships to admit the practical value of this system demands our acknowledgment. They have met our representations by making such an alteration in the second Schedule of the New Code as will allow us to make arrangements for this most desirable end.

Training Colleges.

This improvement is the more important, since many of our pupil teachers are unable to gain admission to the existing overcrowded Training Colleges, and it may not be generally known that we have no such institution of our own; hence we are mainly dependent for our supply of teachers upon Colleges under denominational control. What becomes of these Pupil Teachers? They must either abandon the teaching profession, or be appointed by the Board as Assistant Teachers without

going to College at all. "The loss of a College training," says one of our Inspectors, "is an irreparable loss; I trust that the number of these appointments of Ex-Pupil Teachers will be kept as low as possible, for it would be a calamity to have our Schools taught by a body of poorly educated Teachers."

Expenditure on School Management and Maintenance.

The expenditure of the Board on School management is shown in the accompanying table :—

	Salaries of Teachers.	Books and Apparatus.	Furniture and Cleaning.	Rent, Rates, &c.	Fuel and Lights.	Repairs to Buildings.	Sundries.
Gross Cost per child for the Half-year ended Lady-day, 1880 :—	£ s. d. 1 2 3	s. d. 1 7	s. d. 1 10	s. d 1 6	d. 11	d. 11	d. 7

The gross cost per child for the half year was thus 1*l.* 9*s.* 7*d.*; but during the same period the average income per child from fees, grant, &c., was 11*s.* 5*d.*, so that the nett cost was 18*s.* 2*d.* This shows a decrease for the half-year on every item, making a total reduction of 1*s.* 5*d.* for every child. From the table on the following page it is clear that the payment to Teachers is the principal item of the expense of maintenance. Our Staff is at present as follows :—

Payment of Teachers.

	Number.	Average Fixed Salary.	Average Share of Grant.	Average Total.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Head Masters	274	162 16 11	78 15 2	241 12 1
Head Mistresses	500	107 6 10	54 7 6	161 14 4
Assistant Masters ...	897	87 9 4	23 15 8	111 5 0
Assistant Mistresses ...	1,458	69 0 5	20 15 8	89 16 1
Total	3,129	at an average of		£121 11 8

The Board has under its consideration a proposal for paying its Teachers less by the results of examination, so as to secure greater thoroughness, and to remove the temptation of working feverishly for immediate results. The only point as yet decided is that the basis of calculation shall be accommodation as against attendance. A comparison has been made between the cost of School maintenance in London, and some large provincial towns, and a special Committee of the Board has been appointed to investigate this subject. The answers to its inquiries are now being tabulated, and we may expect from it an early report, which will, we trust, show some feasible way of limiting the expenditure without starving the Schools.

Normal Staff of Teachers.

Another Committee, which was charged with the duty of reporting to us upon the normal Staff of Teachers for each School, has made its report, which is now in the hands of the Divisional Members.

An important question has been raised during the year as to the mode of selection of our Head Teachers,

whose capacity and influence for good greatly vary.

Selection of Head Teachers.

"Your Committee," writes one of our Inspectors, "will be aware that the discipline in some of the Schools in the very worst sections of Finsbury and Marylebone is simply perfect; and there seems no reason why it should not be equally perfect in all Schools save, of course, the excellent reason that the supply of thoroughly efficient Teachers falls short of the demand."

At present the nomination of Teachers comes from the Local Managers; and the suggestion is that this system is defective. Mr. Stokes, in his general Report for the present year, expresses an opinion worthy of consideration. "The management of London Board Schools has always been, perhaps, our greatest difficulty. It is plain that a central board of fifty Members, however well qualified they may be to frame a Code of Rules, cannot attend to their administration in numerous Schools scattered over the wide area of the Metropolitan boroughs. Hence, in order to obtain the requisite oversight, residents in each vicinity are associated with one or more Members of the Board in forming a local Committee of Management, whose chief duty is to nominate Teachers for appointment by the Board.

"I am unable to report, from personal observation in Board Schools, that the management so provided is efficient. . . For, whether from paucity of persons willing to serve upon local Committees or from other causes, it happens that a School

Committee manages, not one School, but a group of Schools. The wisdom of this arrangement may be doubted. Its effect certainly is to lessen the probability of getting the service efficiently performed, to increase the risk of a denominational complexion in the School Committee and of Teachers' nominations made on other than purely educational grounds. Second only in importance to the original selection of conscientious and capable Teachers, is the means of the speedy removal of Teachers who, after appointment, prove themselves undeserving of such a character. I do not know that any system is in operation to secure this end."

The Board is not responsible for any expression of opinion on this subject, but it has been considered well to order a Report upon it; and that Report, which is decidedly adverse to any radical change in the present system of Local Managers, stands for early discussion.

Board's Borrowing Powers.

Our borrowing powers are still before the Courts of Law. In the steps already taken, the Board has acted with the concurrence of the Education Department and the Local Government Board; and it now remains to decide whether the appeal shall be carried to the House of Lords.

Losses by Death.

The changes upon the Board have been many, no fewer than 125 members having taken a share in its work during the past ten years. At the triennial election held last November there were returned twenty-three new members; of

the original Board only twelve are members of the existing Board. The last to be removed was our valued colleague, Mr. James Watson, who in the year 1871 succeeded Lord Sandon as Chairman of the Statistical Committee, and took throughout the deepest interest in the development of our work. Still more lately a true friend of the Board has been taken away in the person of Miss Chessar, whose active and intelligent services on the Second Board many of us gratefully remember.

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